OUTLINE of JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

Israel Goldberg
&
Samson Benderly

VOLUME TWO

STUDENT'S EDITION

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OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

being

A HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

and

AN ANTHOLOGY OF JEWISH LITERATURE

From the Earliest Times to the Present: including a Brief Account of the History and Civilization of the Nations with Whom the Jews Have Come into Contact, and an Exposition of the Present-day Status and Problems of the Jewries of the World

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

With Maps and Illustrations

by

ISRAEL GOLDBERG

Author of "Kasriel the Watchman," "The Golden Stair," etc.

and

SAMSON BENDERLY

Director of the Bureau of Jewish Education

VOLUME TWO

THE FIRST COMMONWEALTH

From the Accession of David to the Fall of Judah

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STUDENT'S EDITION

With Course of Study

BUREAU OF JEWISH EDUCATION
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1930

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Dedicated
to the memory of

Louis Marshall

the peerless leader
to whom the Jewish education
of the American Jewish youth
was of paramount importance
and to whose encouragement and support
this work
is greatly indebted

GENERAL FOREWORD

From Volume One

JEWS of a new generation, in America and other lands, are groping for inner harmony and self-adjustment to their people and their racial heritage. What attitude shall they take toward the Jewish people and its problems? What claims has this people upon them? What is this Jewishness which keeps clinging to them? Why should they and their children continue to be Jews?

Unfortunately, many a modern Jew is called upon to answer those questions without possessing even a minimum of the necessary knowledge — Jewish knowledge. The processes of Jewish education, such as they are in America, for example, have passed them by. And yet, in the bewildering play of forces in which they live, in their groping for light, the most important guide must be the lamp of knowledge.

But Jewish knowledge is a broad and deep ocean. It is an accumulation of several millenia of a rich spiritual and intellectual life. It ramifies into numerous channels, it is stored in many languages, chiefly, of course, in the Hebrew language. For the great majority of modern Jews this knowledge has been well-nigh inapproachable. To overcome the many obstacles that stand in the way of its acquisition, the first necessity is to digest and organize it.

The present work is an attempt to organize Jewish knowledge and present it concisely and graphically.

Its method of organization is not encyclopedic but narrative. Its first basic constituent is a history of the Jewish people from the earliest times to the present. This history is designed to show a people in motion and evolution, a people fashioning its environment and being fashioned by it, creating new conceptions and new ways of life to meet new conditions, fructifying and uplifting the spirit of mankind, suffering and struggling but

never succumbing. In conjunction with this history of the Jews, the history and civilization of those nations with whom the Jews came into contact is briefly sketched in, for the Jews have been the most cosmopolitan people on earth, and they cannot be understood without some knowledge of their neighbors. Moreover, some account of the geography of the lands in which the Jews have lived is woven into this general picture of the civilization of Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Poles, etc. Finally, one of the volumes of this "Outline" is devoted to an exposition of the status and problems of the various Jewries throughout the world.

The second basic constituent of this work consists of an anthology of the literature produced by the Jewish people throughout their career. Literature is perhaps the best available mirror of a people's spirit and mode of life, and when it reflects a life that is rich and complex, it takes on forms of beauty. The selections from Jewish literature that have been made for each period are believed to reflect the ideals, beliefs and mode of life of the Jews of that period, and, in addition, possess that intangible quality of beauty and spiritual impulsion which make them valuable in and for themselves. Further, the books from which selections have been made, are described and summarized, so that the reader may obtain some knowledge of the major books that constitute the vast storehouse of Jewish literature.

A brief statement of the contents of each volume of this work will make clearer its general scope.

Volume One deals with the beginnings and earliest struggles of the Jewish people, its period of probation, as it were, until the death of Saul.

Volume Two embraces the period of the First Commonwealth, from David to the Babylonian Exile.

Volume Three takes in the Second Commonwealth, from the restoration of the exiles to the destruction of the Jewish state by Rome.

Volume Four, beginning the story of the long dispersion, deals with the fortunes of the communities of Western Asia, of which that of Babylonia was the most important.

Volume Five is concerned with the brilliant and tragic career of the Jews of Spain, from its start until the fateful year 1492.

Volume Six covers the history of the Jews of the West — France, Germany, England, etc., until the French Revolution.

Volume Seven deals with the Jews of the East — Eastern Europe and Asia — where the community of Poland achieved first rank.

Volume Eight, embracing both East and West, opens the modern period of Jewish history, and centers around the struggle for emancipation.

Volume Nine continues the story until the outbreak of the World War, the principal focus of interest being now the national renaissance.

Volume Ten is devoted to the history and present-day problems of the Jews of America.

Volume Eleven deals with the fortunes of the other leading Jewish communities since the World War and their present-day status.

Volume Twelve is concerned with Palestine, its fortunes, problems and relations with the Jewries of the World.

The authors of this work are aware that it possesses shortcomings that arise from various causes, and not least from the peculiar difficulties that inhere in the task of writing the story of a scattered people. They believe, however, that it will fulfill its primary purpose: to give the modern Jew a fund of knowledge and understanding of his people which will help him to adjust himself, as a Jew, in the world in which he lives.

New York, September, 1929.

I. G.
S. B.

PREFACE TO VOLUME TWO

IN PRESENTING to readers and students the second volume of the OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE, the authors deem it necessary to call attention again to the general scope and method of this work as a history of the Jewish people combined with an anthology of Jewish literature. Within the boundaries of Jewish history and Jewish literature, all essential Jewish knowledge will find itself embraced. If additional proof had been needed of the widespread demand for a work of this character, it was furnished by the warm welcome which the first volume was accorded.

That volume dealt with the founding of the nation. The period of the First Commonwealth, which is the theme of the present volume, begins with the glories of David and Solomon, continues through the crises and disasters of the period of division, and ends with the catastrophe which, to all appearances, spelled the final doom of the nation. The period saw profound changes in the domestic life of the people, as well as new contacts with foreign civilizations. It saw, also, profound changes in its inner life, and an extraordinary flowering of its genius. It was the period of the great prophets of Israel.

Prophecy in its many implications — religious, ethical, sociologic, literary, and even temperamental — is the force that made Israel and Judah unique among the otherwise similar states, kindred to them in race and language, that surrounded them. In the consciousness of the Jewish people of to-day, the prophets, particularly Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, take precedence over the kings themselves as makers of the history of their times. As an influence still potent in the world at large, prophecy, in its religious, ethical and poetic significance, is regarded as the most important contribution of the Hebrew genius.

Prophecy, therefore, was bound to be the center of gravity in

this history of the First Commonwealth and in the anthology which accompanies and illumines it. But the aim of the authors has been not only to bring into relief prophecy in general, but to portray each of the great prophets as a distinct and individualized personality. They have endeavored to build up such portraits by projecting each of the prophets against the historic and social background of his times, by revealing the rôle he played in the events of his day and, finally, by emphasizing his basic ideas and special temperamental traits. The latter, no doubt, are as important as any other factor for rendering personality distinctive and individual.

For the rest, in telling the story of the First Commonwealth, the authors have been mindful of the underlying character of their work as a whole, which is a history not so much of individuals as of the Jewish people. This history, they have described as "designed to show a people in motion and evolution, a people fashioning its environment and being fashioned by it, creating new conceptions and new ways of life to meet new conditions, fructifying and uplifting the spirit of mankind, suffering and struggling but never succumbing."

Grateful acknowledgment is again extended to the Jewish Publication Society of America for permission to publish selections from its translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, to Dr. Joshua H. Neumann for assistance in the preparation of this volume, and to Messrs. Saul and Joseph Raskin, who prepared the maps and illustrations.

New York, January, 1930.

I. G.
S. B.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME TWO

PAGE

TOPIC SEVEN: DAVID THE KING

§ 1. After Reigning Seven Years over Judah Alone, David Is Chosen King over All Israel 3

§ 2. David Defeats the Philistines and Captures Jerusalem Which He Makes the Political and Religious Center of the Kingdom 9

§ 3. David Conquers His Enemies North, East and South, until His Kingdom Becomes an Empire 18

§ 4. The Later Years of David's Reign Are Marred by Family Feuds and Disturbances of Which Absalom's Revolt Is the Most Serious 24

§ 5. Having Named Solomon His Successor, David Dies after a Reign of Forty Years, and Is Remembered as Israel's Greatest King 30

TOPIC SEVEN: LITERATURE

1. An Exploit of David's *Gibborim* 36
2. The Parable of Nathan the Prophet 38
3. David's Flight from Absalom 39
4. The Battle of the Forest of Ephraim 43
5. David Bids Solomon Build the Temple 48
6. The Psalms 50

I. *Psalms Related to Events in David's Life*

a. When David Fled Before Saul 52
b. The King's Declaration of Policy 54
c. When the Ark Was Brought to Jerusalem . . 54
d. When the King Went Forth to Fight His Enemies 56
e. When David Fled from Absalom 57

II. *Psalms of Praise and Adoration*

a. God's Glory Poured Out on Man 59
b. The Glory of God in Nature and His Torah . . 60

PAGE

c. God the Good Shepherd 61
d. The Beauty and Might of God's Holiness . . . 62
e. The Wisdom and Glory of God Manifest in His Works 63

TOPIC EIGHT: SOLOMON THE MAGNIFICENT

§ 1. David's Son Solomon, Famous for His Wisdom and Splendor, Assures His Crown and Sets Up a Firm Government 69
§ 2. The Forty Years of His Reign Are a Period of Peace Secured by Alliances with Foreign Countries and Diplomatic Marriages 74
§ 3. Solomon Builds Many Splendid Edifices in Jerusalem, the Most Important Being the Temple on Mount Zion 79
§ 4. The Israelites, in the Meantime, Had Become a Nation of Small Farmers, though Shepherding Predominated in the South 87
§ 5. With All His Greatness, the People Harbor Many Grievances against Solomon, and a Certain Jeroboam Attempts a Rebellion 95

TOPIC EIGHT: LITERATURE

1. The Struggle between Solomon and Adonijah 100
2. Solomon's Dream 105
3. The Wisdom of the Young King 107
4. The Dedication of the Temple 108
5. Solomon and the Queen of Sheba 115
6. Solomon and Jeroboam 117

TOPIC NINE: THE CHECKERED CAREER OF ISRAEL

§ 1. The North, upon the Death of Solomon, Secedes and Chooses Jeroboam for Its King 123
§ 2. After a Number of Bloody Dynastic Changes, Comes the Dynasty of Omri, the Most Important of All That Reigned over Israel 127
§ 3. The Arameans and Phoenicians Are the Foreign Nations with Whom Israel Is Most Closely in Contact . . . 133
§ 4. In the Reign of Ahab, Son of Omri, the Prophet Elijah Labors to Clear Israel of Phoenician Idolatry . . . 142
§ 5. The Dynasty Founded by Omri Is Brought to a Bloody End by Jehu, the Commander of the Israelite Army . 150

PAGE

§ 6. Israel Is Brought to a Low Pass under Jehu, but Is Restored under His Grandson Jehoash 158

Topic Nine: Literature

1. The Revolt of the North 162
2. Elijah Victorious 165
3. The Still Small Voice 169
4. The Story of Naboth's Vineyard 171
5. The Campaign against Moab 174
6. Jehu the Avenger 177
7. A Proud King Humbled 180

Topic Ten: The Downfall of Israel

§ 1. Both in Israel and Judah, Economic Inequalities of Far-reaching Importance Have Come into Existence . . 185
§ 2. In the Prosperous Reign of Jeroboam II, the Prophet Amos Appears in Israel and Denounces the Rich Oppressors 189
§ 3. The Other Great Prophet of the Period Is Hosea of Israel Who Laments the Doom Which He Sees Approaching 196
§ 4. Assyria, Cruel and Irresistible, Had Begun Her Career in Upper Mesopotamia and Now Reached Out to Conquer the World 200
§ 5. In 722 B.C.E., Samaria Is Taken by the Assyrians, Her People Exiled and Israel Is No More 207

Topic Ten: Literature

A. Amos

Introduction: On the Evolution of Prophecy . . . 215
1. An Arraignment of Israel 219
2. Wicked Samaria 222
3. The Day of the Lord 224
4. Israel Doomed 226

B. Hosea

Foreword 231
1. Unfaithful Israel 232
2. Israel's Guilt and Punishment 234
3. God's Love for Israel 237
4. New Betrothal 238

PAGE

TOPIC ELEVEN: JUDAH AND ISAIAH

§ 1. Through Varying Fortunes the House of David Continues to Reign in Judah 243
§ 2. After the Prosperous Reign of Uzziah, King Ahaz Becomes the Vassal of Assyria Whose Cult He Brings into Jerusalem 250
§ 3. The Prophet and Statesman Isaiah, Champion of the Poor and Oppressed, Is the Dominant Figure of the Age 254
§ 4. Another Great Prophet of the Age Is the Peasant Micah, Who Declaims against the Vices of the City 260
§ 5. The Young King Hezekiah, Spurred on by Isaiah, Begins His Reign with a Widespread Religious Reform . . 263
§ 6. The Assyrian Emperor Sennacherib Sets Out to Take Jerusalem, but, even as Isaiah Foretells, He Meets with Disaster, and Judah Is Saved 270
§ 7. Amid Sorrow and Foreboding, Isaiah Is Upheld by His Faith in the Saving Remnant, the Perfect King or Messiah, and Universal Justice and Peace 280

TOPIC ELEVEN: LITERATURE

A. ISAIAH
Foreword 287
1. The Consecration of the Prophet 288
2. The Vineyard of the Lord 291
3. An Arraignment of Israel 296
4. The Iniquity of Jerusalem 299
5. Sennacherib's Blasphemy and Defeat 303
6. Proud Assyria Denounced 308
7. "The End of Days" 311

B. MICAH
Foreword 317
1. The Doom of Samaria and Jerusalem 318
2. Wicked Rulers and False Prophets 320
3. "What Doth the LORD Require of Thee?" 323

TOPIC TWELVE: THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH

§ 1. During the Long Reign of Manasseh, Judah Remains Subject to Assyria, with Religious Reaction in Full Swing 327

PAGE

§ 2. As Assyria Begins Tottering to Her Fall, the Prophets Nahum and Zephaniah Are Heard in Judah 333
§ 3. In the Early Years of Jeremiah's Prophetic Calling, the Good King Josiah Cleans the Land of Idolatry . . . 336
§ 4. The Fall of Assyria Brings Babylonia, Now Held by the Chaldeans, Again to the Fore, and in 597 B.C.E. Comes the First Babylonian Captivity 344
§ 5. The Prophet Jeremiah, Fearless, Passionate and Uncompromising, Stands Out as the Dominant Figure of the Period 351
§ 6. In 586 B.C.E., Jerusalem Is Taken and Destroyed by the Chaldeans, the Temple Burnt Down, and the People of Judah Led Away Captive to Babylonia 357

TOPIC TWELVE: LITERATURE

A. JEREMIAH
Foreword 367
1. The Prophet Summoned 369
2. The Prophet's Plea 372
3. The Grievous Sins of the People 377
4. The Enemy from the North 380
5. A Vision of Restoration 383
6. The Prophet Denounces King Jehoiakim 388
7. The Parable of the Potter and the Clay 390
8. The Foolish Trust in Temple and Sacrifice . . . 391
9. The Prophet Exults in Egypt's Defeat 395
10. The Perfidy of the Slave Owners 397
11. The Prophet Bewails His Destiny 399
12. The Prophet in Despair for His People 401
B. A DIRGE FOR ZION OVERTHROWN 403
C. ZEPHANIAH
The Day of Wrath 408
D. NAHUM
A Paean for the Downfall of Nineveh 412

COURSE OF STUDY

TOPIC SEVEN: DAVID THE KING

A. Summary 421
B. Questions 424
C. Subjects for Essays 429
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 429

PAGE

Topic Eight: Solomon the Magnificent

A. Summary 430
B. Questions 433
C. Subjects for Essays 436
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 437

Topic Nine: The Checkered Career of Israel

A. Summary 438
B. Questions 442
C. Subjects for Essays 445
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 446

Topic Ten: The Downfall of Israel

A. Summary 447
B. Questions 450
C. Subjects for Essays 454
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 454

Topic Eleven: Judah and Isaiah

A. Summary 455
B. Questions 460
C. Subjects for Essays 464
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 465

Topic Twelve: The Downfall of Judah

A. Summary 466
B. Questions 471
C. Subjects for Essays 476
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 477

Chronological Charts 479

Index xxi

LIST OF MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

MAPS

	PAGE
The Hills and Valleys of Jerusalem	10
The Environs of Jerusalem	16
The Empire of David and Solomon	23
Jerusalem in the Reign of Solomon	70
The Trade Routes That Led to Palestine	73
The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah	125
Phoenicia, Aram, Israel and Judah	134
The Assyrian Empire	204
Jerusalem in the Reign of Hezekiah	263
The Kingdom of Judah in the Time of Jeremiah	328
The Eastern World after the Fall of Assyria	348

ILLUSTRATIONS

Where David Was Crowned King of Judah	6
Remains of the Jebusite Fortifications	12
Looking toward Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives	13
Looking toward the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem	14
Modern Amman, Site of Rabbath-ammon	20
Akabah, Site of the Red Sea Ports	22
Where the Valley of Hinnom Meets the Valley of the Kidron	26
Where Araunah the Jebusite Had His Threshing Floor	31
Traditional Site of David's Tomb at Jerusalem	34
The Gezer Calendar	76
The Temple of Solomon the Magnificent	78
Plan of the Temple and Other Royal Buildings Erected by Solomon	80
Cedars of Lebanon	81
The House of the Forest of Lebanon	82
Ground Plan of Solomon's Temple	84
The Brazen Altar of Solomon's Temple	85

PAGE

The "Molten Sea" 86
A Portable Laver 87
Farming Implements of Ancient Palestine 88
The Threshing Floor of a Modern Arab Village in Palestine . 89
Arab Shepherds with Their Flocks in Modern Palestine . . . 90
Ancient Jewelry Found in Palestine 92
The Temple Area as It Looks To-day 94
One of the Pools of Solomon 119
Modern Nablus Where Stood Ancient Shechem 128
Shishak's Monument to His Victories 129
A Sacred Bull 130
Damascus, the "Head of Aram" 131
A Modern Village in the Lebanon Mountains 136
Modern Sur, Where the Great Phoenician City of Tyre Once Stood 138
Phoenician Vase and Bowls 139
Hebrew, Phoenician, Greek and Other Alphabets 140
King Jehaumelek of Gebal Brings His Patron Goddess a Libation 141
Foundation of Omri's Palace in Samaria 143
Worshiping an Ashera 144
The Patron Goddess of Gebal 147
Digging Up the Palace of Ahab in Samaria 149
Where Omri and Ahab Once Reigned in Splendor 152
The Moabite Stone 154
A Scene in Transjordania 155
King Jehu of Israel Bringing Tribute to Shalmaneser III . . 159
Hebrew Seal of the Time of Jeroboam II 160
On the Road to Tekoa 190
A Shepherd and His Flock 193
Assyria's Enemies Take Flight in Their Ships 194
Assyrian War Chariot Playing Havoc with the Foe 198
Assyrian Foot Soldiers 200
The Assyrian War God Assur 201
An Assyrian Monarch Offers Sacrifice 202
The Famous "Black Obelisk" of Shalmaneser III 203
Assyrians Torturing Their Captives 206
Assyrian Archers, Mounted and on Foot 207
Tiglath-pileser III 209
Sargon II 210
The "Tombs of the Kings" near Jerusalem 245

PAGE

Ishtar as the Goddess of Vegetation 247
A Winged Human-headed Bull 251
The God Assur, Conqueror of the Locust 253
"And He Built a Tower in the Midst of It" 257
Rimmon or Hadad, the Assyrian God of Thunder 258
The Famous Inscription Found in the Siloam Aqueduct (Hezekiah's Tunnel) 265
The "Pool of Hezekiah" at Jerusalem 266
The Heavens Pictured as a Cow 268
Assyrians Storming a City 269
Merodach-baladan Making a Grant to One of His Nobles . . 271
Assyrians Attacking the Walls of a City 273
A Mounted Assyrian Archer 274
Judean Captives and Booty Taken by the Assyrians 275
Sennacherib on His Throne before the City of Lachish . . . 276
Sennacherib Seated on His Throne 278
The Pharaoh Tirhakah 279
A Procession of Gods Borne by Assyrian Soldiers 281
A Babylonian-Assyrian Storm Demon 330
The Assyrian Emperor Esarhaddon Triumphant 331
Where Jeremiah's Native Village Once Stood 337
The Ain Fara (Spring of Fara) near Anathoth 340
An Assyrian Tablet for Exorcizing Demons 343
The Glory That Was Nineveh 345
A Scarab of the Pharaoh Necho 346
Ruins of a Palace at Megiddo 347
An Incense Burner from Megiddo 349
The Babylonian "Queen of Heaven" 352
Grotto of Jeremiah at Jerusalem 355
Ruins of the Gate of Ishtar, Babylon 358
A Brick Stamp of Nebuchadnezzar 361
Off to Exile 362

TOPIC SEVEN

David the King

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§ 1. *After Reigning Seven Years over Judah Alone, David Is Chosen King over All Israel.*

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TOPIC SEVEN: LITERATURE

1. An Exploit of David's Gibborim (2 *Samuel* 5^{17}; 23^{13-17}).
2. The Parable of Nathan the Prophet (2 *Samuel* $12^{1-10; 13}$).
3. David's Flight from Absalom (2 *Samuel* 15^{13-37}; 16^{1-14}).
4. The Battle of the Forest of Ephraim (2 *Samuel* 18; 19^{1-9}).
5. David Bids Solomon Build the Temple (1 *Chronicles* $28^{1-13; 20-21}$).
6. The Psalms:
   - I. *Psalms Related to Events in David's Life*
     - a. When David Fled before Saul (Psalms 57; 142).
     - b. The King's Declaration of Policy (Psalms 101).
     - c. When the Ark Was Brought to Jerusalem (Psalms 24; 15).
     - d. When the King Went Forth to Fight His Enemies (Psalms 60).
     - e. When David Fled from Absalom (Psalms 3; 63).
   - II. *Psalms of Praise and Adoration*
     - a. God's Glory Poured out on Man (Psalms 8).
     - b. The Glory of God in Nature and in His Torah (Psalms 19).
     - c. God the Good Shepherd (Psalms 23).
     - d. The Beauty and Might of God's Holiness (Psalms 29).
     - e. The Wisdom and Glory of God Manifest in His Works (Psalms 104).

OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

Volume Two

TOPIC SEVEN

David the King

§ 1. *After Reigning Seven Years over Judah Alone, David Is Chosen King over All Israel.*

DAVID, the fugitive and outlaw, was resting in his stronghold of Ziklag from his battle with the Amalekites when a ragged stranger arrived from the north with tidings of the disaster on Mount Gilboa. The messenger was an Amalekite. He brought David the crown of Saul and, in the hope of greater reward, declared that he himself had slain the King.

But when David heard that Israel had been smitten and that Saul and Jonathan were dead, he was overwhelmed with grief. He ordered the Amalekite slain for having "put forth his hand to destroy the Lord's anointed." He rent his clothes and he and his men mourned and wept and fasted "for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the Lord and for the house of Israel, because they were fallen by the sword." And David gave utterance to his sorrow in a lament of wonderful tenderness and beauty. Thus he sang of

Saul, his enemy no longer, and of Jonathan, the friend of his bosom:

Thy beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!
How are the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;[1]

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,[2]
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised[3] triumph.

Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,
Neither fields of choice fruits;
For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.[4]

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan, the lovely and the pleasant
In their lives, even in their death they were not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,[5]
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

[1] Gath and Ashkelon were Philistine cities.

[2] It was the custom for the women to welcome home their victorious warriors with singing and dancing (see vol. 1, p. 299). David imagines the rejoicing of the Philistine women and gives vent to his chagrin.

[3] The Philistines, who were not Semites but Aryans, were the only people of Canaan who did not practice circumcision.

[4] The meaning probably is: "as though he had not been anointed with oil."

[5] The women took the lead in public mourning as well as in public rejoicing.

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!
Jonathan upon thy [6] high places is slain!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan;
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Wonderful was thy love to me,
Passing the love of women.

How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

But the times demanded action, not tears. The yoke of the Philistines was again laid on Israel's neck. Only by preserving the union which had been created under Saul, and which now threatened to go to pieces, could the nation expect to cope with the powerful enemy. To preserve the union, the first necessity was a king who should be a wise ruler and an able warrior.

David felt that he was the man. His warriors, whom his skill and daring had saved from many a difficult situation, were of the same opinion. They were all, and especially Joab and his two brothers Abishai and Asahel, deeply devoted to their brilliant leader. It was time, David believed, to return to his own country. So he left Ziklag and the territory of the Philistines, and came with all his followers to Hebron, the principal city of his own tribe of Judah. The elders of the tribe were his friends. They came together in Hebron and elected David king of Judah.

In the meantime, however, Ishbaal, a son of Saul, had been proclaimed king over Israel. After the battle of Gilboa, Abner, Saul's commander, had escaped with Ishbaal and the remnant of his army across the Jordan, and had set up headquarters at a place called Mahanaim.

[6] Compare this line with the first.

Ishbaal was king in name only; he was a weakling and a puppet in the hands of Abner.

David, however, was too ambitious to tolerate a rival king. Shrewdly he began by courting the favor of the other tribes. He sent messengers to the people of Jabesh

Courtesy Brentano's, New York.

WHERE DAVID WAS CROWNED KING OF JUDAH

This is a view of modern Hebron, the large building with the turreted walls being a mosque erected on the traditional site of the Cave of Machpelah which Abraham bought for a burial-place from Ephron the Hittite. The city is located on one of the highest points of the central range. Here David reigned for seven years until he captured Jerusalem and made that city his capital.

praising them for having rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons from the Philistines, and reminding them, at the same time, that Israel had need of a strong king.

Finally, fighting broke out between the forces of Ishbaal, headed by Abner, and those of David, headed by Joab. The war dragged on. "David waxed stronger

and stronger but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." In one of the many fights that took place, Abner, closely chased by the fleet-footed Asahel, was compelled to turn and kill his pursuer. Thus the duty of blood-revenge was laid on Joab, Asahel's brother.

At length, Abner grew tired of fighting for his weakling master, with whom, besides, he had had a serious personal quarrel. So Abner made secret overtures to David, offering to bring all Israel under his scepter. David's first condition was that his wife Michal, daughter of Saul, be restored to him. Michal was brought to David, and Abner himself came up to Hebron to parley with him.

David gave Abner and his retinue a royal reception. There was a feast, and Abner promised to "gather all Israel unto my lord the king." Joab, Abner's mortal enemy, was absent from Hebron on a raid. The feast was over, last assurances of friendship and loyalty were exchanged, and Abner went away. He had not gone far from Hebron when Joab returned from his raid, and learned that his enemy had been received and honored by his king. Bitterly he upbraided David, declaring that Abner intended to betray him. Then he sent messengers who recalled Abner, and when the grizzled old warrior of Saul returned, Joab took him aside in the gate, as though to speak to him in private, and slew him. The duty of blood-revenge was accomplished.

David was indignant over the foul deed. He cursed Joab and his house, and lamented the death of Abner. "Rend your clothes," he ordered his people, "and gird you with sackcloth, and wail before Abner." His grief was so sincere that no one could accuse him of having instigated the murder. The crime, however, furthered

his plans, for he would have had a most difficult time with both generals on his hands, each one striving to be supreme.

Shortly afterwards, two Benjaminites came to David, and, in the hope of obtaining reward, brought him the head of Ishbaal whom they had murdered. But David was overcome with horror. He ordered the criminals executed, and accorded last honors to the remains of Saul's son. Of Saul's descendants only one was now left who might claim the throne. He was Meribaal, son of Jonathan. But Meribaal was only five years old, and a cripple besides.

Soon afterwards, the chiefs of the northern tribes assembled in Hebron, and after making a covenant with David, anointed him king over all Israel. It was the year 1006 B.C.E. For seven years David had reigned over Judah alone. Now the nation was again united under a single head.

§ 2. *David Defeats the Philistines and Captures Jerusalem Which He Makes the Political and Religious Center of the Kingdom.*

THE field was now free for David to bring into full play his genius as a soldier and statesman. During his long reign of thirty-three years as king over all Israel, he defeated his enemies on every side, captured Jerusalem and made it the religious and political capital of the kingdom, established a system of government administration, and, despite domestic disturbances and rebellions, bequeathed a united and powerful nation to his successor.

David's first task was to free his people from the yoke of the Philistines. That was no easy matter. The Philistines did not wait to be attacked. As soon as they learned that David had been chosen king over all the tribes, they invaded Judah, intending, no doubt, to break the Israelite union before it could become effective. The war that followed was long and bitter. At one time David was forced to abandon Hebron and take refuge again in Adullam. His *gibborim* or "mighty men" performed prodigies of valor against the Philistines. They met the Philistine champions in single combat and overthrew them. Among those *gibborim* David himself was always in the lead until they compelled him not to risk his life in battle, "that thou quench not the lamp of Israel."

In the end the Philistines found David more than a match for them. In the Plain of Rephaim, south-west of Jerusalem, he twice inflicted a severe defeat upon them. Then he invaded their territory and captured the city of Gath. The enemy, though not broken, was

subdued, and no longer troubled the children of Israel.

While the war with the Philistines was still in progress, David removed his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem, a statesmanlike achievement which had the most far-reaching consequences. Hebron, as a center for the

THE HILLS AND VALLEYS OF JERUSALEM

united tribes, had a number of serious shortcomings. In the first place it was too far south. Second, it was the principal city of Judah and closely identified with that tribe. The fact that David himself was a Judahite made Hebron all the more objectionable. The other tribes would either become jealous and resentful of

Judah, or come to look upon David as a tribal chief rather than as king over all Israel. Shechem the principal city of Ephraim was more centrally located, but to have made that city the capital would have aroused the jealousy of Judah. Besides, David was not sure that he could always count on the loyalty of the arrogant and unruly Ephraimites.

On the border between Benjamin and Judah still stood the mountain fortress of Jebus or Jerusalem, which, ever since the days of Joshua, two centuries before, had been defying the Israelites. Jebus, with its powerful citadel perched on Mount Zion, was like a wedge stuck in between Judah and the rest of the country. An attempt made by the warriors of Judah shortly after the death of Joshua to conquer Jebus, or Jerusalem, was only partly successful, for the Jebusites continued to hold the citadel, which stood as a challenge and a menace to all Israel.

David resolved to remove the menace. He saw clearly how greatly his prestige would rise if he conquered a fortress which was believed to be impregnable. The Jebusites were over-confident: derisively they told David that their blind and lame would be sufficient to defend the city against the Israelites. But David's veterans, led by Joab, captured the citadel of Zion and the whole of Jebus was in his hands. He renamed the fortress City of David.

The King was impressed with the advantages of Jerusalem as a capital for his kingdom. Lying in the territory of Benjamin, it stood midway between Judah and Ephraim. As a new conquest, it held a position of neutrality among the tribes. Neither Judah nor Ephraim would be favored by its choice, so that neither one would

be jealous of the other. Moreover, not far from Jerusalem ran the caravan roads which connected Syria and Egypt as well as the eastern and western parts of the country.

REMAINS OF THE JEBUSITE FORTIFICATIONS

This rough masonry was excavated on the eastern slope of Mt. Moriah and is believed to have belonged to the fortress captured by David. The Jebusites, one of the Semitic nations inhabiting Canaan, were a warlike people. Their capital, called in the El-Amarna letters *Uru-salim,* or Jerusalem, was also known as Jebus. The squared tower on the left was probably built by Solomon.

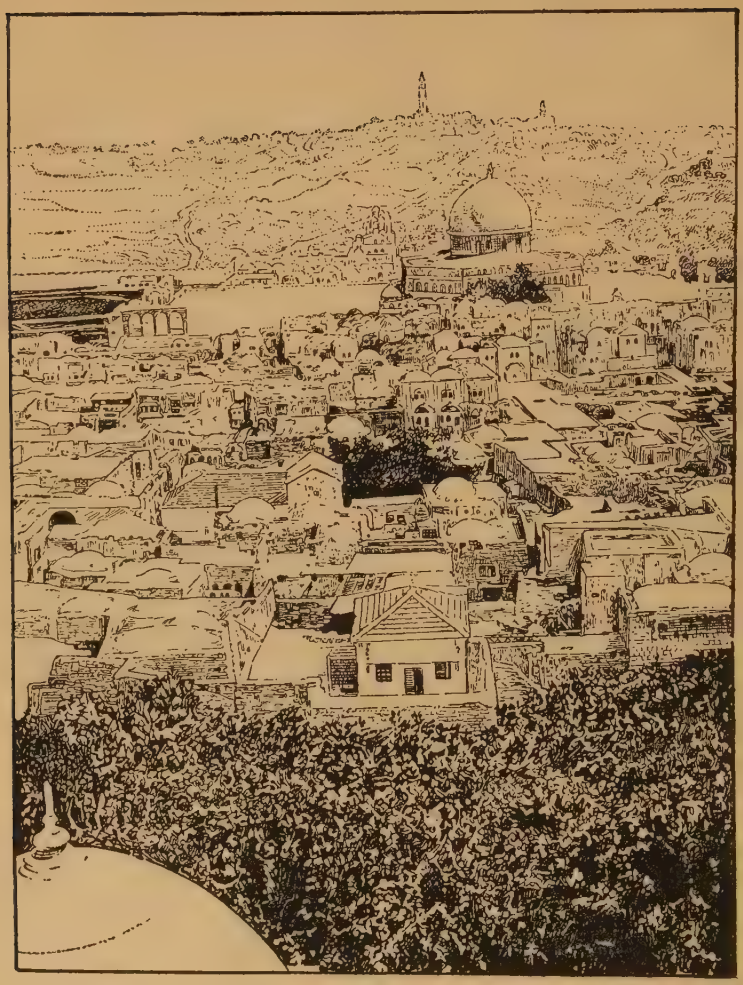
But what appealed to David most of all was, no doubt, the natural strength of the location, which, with the necessary fortifications, would give the city immense power of resistance against enemies. For on three sides, west, south and east, Jerusalem is encircled by deep val-

leys from which rise up the hills on which the city is built. The valley of Hinnom runs down on the west and swings like a crescent along the south. On the east stretches the valley of the Kidron and meets the valley of Hinnom at the pool of Siloam. The hills which are

LOOKING TOWARD JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

This, of course, is a glimpse of the Holy City as she looks to-day. Between the Mount and the city runs the valley of the Kidron, known also as the valley of Jehoshaphat ("the Lord judges"), where, according to popular belief, the final judgment of the nations will take place. The domed building on the right is the Mosque of Omar. The Jewish Quarter of the city is below it toward the left.

girdled by Hinnom and Kidron are to-day of fairly uniform height: about 2500 feet above sea-level. In ancient times, however, a depression known as the Tyropean Valley, now filled in with the débris of the centuries, ran in a general northerly direction and separated the western hill, or Ophel, from the eastern, on which, it is now believed, the citadel of Zion was located. East



LOOKING TOWARD THE MOUNT OF OLIVES FROM JERUSALEM

The large domed building opposite the Mount is the Mosque of Omar occupying the site where once stood the Temple of Solomon. Between the Mount of Olives and the city runs the valley of the Kidron. The building on the summit of the Mount is the so-called Russian Tower. The northern rise of the Mount of Olives is known as Mount Scopus where the Hebrew University is located.

of the Kidron Valley rises the Mount of Olives, consisting of a series of summits, of which Mount Scopus is the highest and most famous. The Mount of Olives overtops the general elevation of the city by about 500 feet.

David's practiced eye saw that, with the advantages furnished by its topography, Jerusalem could be made into a fortress that would be well nigh impregnable. East, south and west the city would be almost inaccessible, so that the defenders could concentrate nearly all their strength in warding off attacks from the north. The subsequent history of the city bore out David's estimate of its strategic importance.

Accordingly, King David removed his residence to the Hill of Zion, which he fortified still more. With the friendly aid of Hiram, king of Tyre, who sent him cedar-trees as well as carpenters and masons, David built a palace for himself and his numerous household. The elevation on the other side of the Tyropean Valley he turned over for barracks and houses to Joab and his warriors. Thus, an Israelite royal city arose where the last Canaanite stronghold had reared its insolent head.

Having made Jerusalem the political capital of his kingdom, David now performed another masterstroke of statesmanship by making it the religious capital as well. This he accomplished by transferring the holy Ark of the Covenant to his new residence. This Ark, most sacred to the Israelites, had marched with them through the desert. When it had rested in the sanctuary at Shiloh, that city had naturally been looked upon as the religious center of all the tribes. The Philistines, who had captured the Ark at the battle of Aphek some eighty

years before, had relinquished possession of it, for its presence had brought them many calamities.

It was a great day in the history of Israel, and, for that matter, in the history of mankind, when the Ark,

THE ENVIRONS OF JERUSALEM

borne on the shoulders of Levites, was carried in solemn procession to Mount Zion. There were sacrifices to the Lord, whose Presence was deemed to dwell in the Ark, and joyous singing and dancing in which the King him-

self took the lead as he marched at the head of the procession. On Mount Zion, the Ark was placed in a tent even as on the journey through Sinai.

The Ark, David felt, deserved a more magnificent domicile. "See now," said he to the prophet Nathan, "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within the curtain." But the prophet Nathan prevailed on the King to leave the building of a temple to his successor. The undertaking was too vast and David could by no means rest from other and more pressing labors. And there was still another reason. In later life, David himself declared it to his people. "God said unto me," he told them: "Thou shalt not build a house for My name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood." God's house must be a temple of peace.

Thus was the first of those deeds accomplished which made Jerusalem the heart of Israel, and, later, of many other nations as well. In time, the city founded by David became the shrine to which all men of Israel came to worship on the three great pilgrimage-festivals of the year: Passover, Shabuoth and Succoth. It came to be regarded as the only legitimate center of worship for all the tribes. It became the spiritual as well as the physical stronghold of the nation, the gathering place of patriots, priests and prophets, the visible symbol of the nation's greatness and glory. Through the genius of David, Jerusalem became the Holy City of Israel and the Holy City, *par excellence,* of mankind.

§ 3. *David Conquers His Enemies North, East and South until His Kingdom Becomes an Empire.*

THE defeat of the Philistines and the establishment of his capital did not, however, bring David rest from his labors and perils. North, east and south of his kingdom, the old enemies of Israel and a number of new ones became anxious and worried. Were the Israelite tribes, they asked themselves, hitherto so easy to attack and plunder, to be really united under a strong and ambitious ruler? David, they perceived, was altogether different from the brooding and impulsive Saul. David's strength and success, they felt, was a menace to themselves.

The new king of Israel was not only an excellent commander in the field, but an able military organizer and civil ruler as well. With himself in supreme control, he appointed competent heads over every branch of his government, military, civil and religious. He had his ministers, scribes and chancellors. His chief priests were Zadok and Abiathar, of whom the second had shared his toils and perils in the days of his flight and exile. No conflict between the secular and religious authority marred the reign of David as it had marred the reign of Saul and brought that unhappy king to his decline. David was supreme. There was only one man, who, when the occasion demanded it, assumed the right to oppose him. This was the prophet Nathan who acted as the fearless spokesman for the conscience of the people.

But the most important advance which David made was in the organization of his military forces. In this respect he had learned a great deal from the Philistines.

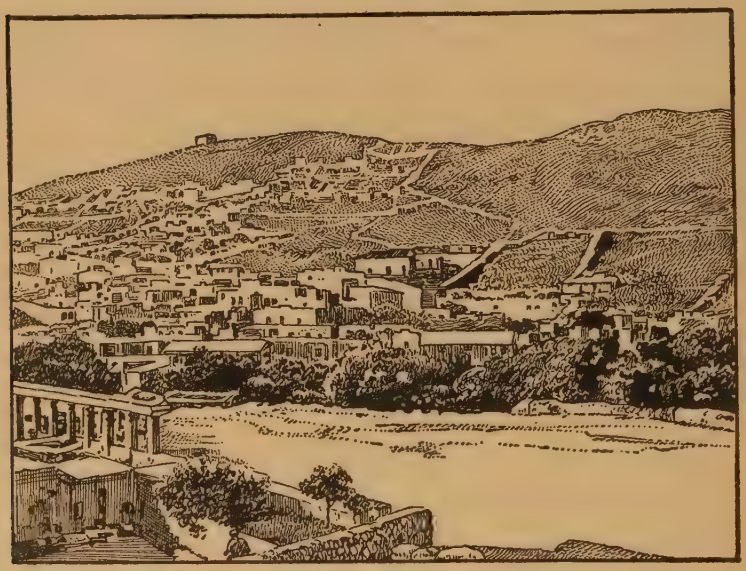
In his citadel in Jerusalem he stored a large supply of arms with which he equipped his warriors. He enrolled Philistines and other foreigners as mercenaries in his special guard which made up the nucleus of his army. The commander of this guard was Benaiah son of Jehoiada. Thus David always had a reliable force at his command, which was attached to him by the bonds of personal loyalty and obligation. He had in addition a smaller unit of thirty *gibborim,* "mighty men" or heroes, who were distinguished by their extraordinary prowess. The bulk of his army, however, the warriors with whom he conquered his enemies on all his frontiers, were the men of Israel over whom the commander was Joab.

The most formidable enemies with whom, after the Philistines, David had to deal, were the Ammonites. The war with Ammon arose as the result of an unprovoked insult inflicted by Hanun, the Ammonite king, upon David's ambassadors whom the Israelite king had dispatched with a message of condolence on the death of Hanun's father. David declared war, and Hanun made an alliance with the Arameans, a strong people to the north and east, whose lands extended as far as the River Euphrates.

Crossing the Jordan at the head of his army, Joab encountered the Ammonites and Arameans drawn up in separate contingents. He divided his forces, gave one part in command to his brother Abishai who moved against the Ammonites, and with the other he inflicted a severe defeat on the Arameans. The Ammonites fled for safety behind the walls of their capital.

The following year, Hadadezer, king of Zobah, the most powerful of the Aramean rulers, assembled a great force under the command of his general Shobach, which

moved down against Israel. David moved up to meet Shobach and routed him. Shobach was slain. The Aramean horsemen and chariots were overthrown. Hadadezer made still another attempt with the assistance of Damascus. David again defeated the enemy.



MODERN AMMAN, SITE OF RABBATH-AMMON

Rabbath-ammon, or Rabbah, was the capital of Ammon and was situated on a hill overlooking the River Jabbok. The city possessed excellent natural defenses and underwent a long siege before Joab finally captured it. In later centuries the Egyptian ruler Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–247 B.C.E.) renamed the city Philadelphia. To-day Amman is a flourishing town inhabited by Arabs and Circassians and is the capital of Transjordania.

He annexed Zobah and Damascus, and placed there his own garrisons and governors. The enemies of Hadadezer, rejoicing in his downfall, became allies of David.

In the meantime, Joab continued to operate against the Ammonites. No longer assisted by the Arameans, they were easily vanquished by Joab's hardy warriors. He defeated them in the field and besieged their cap-

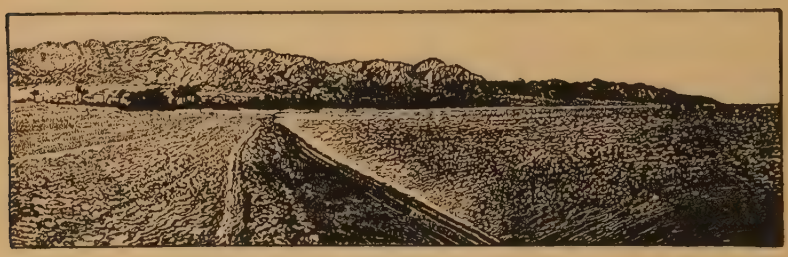
ital Rabbath-ammon. After storming the royal citadel, he sent word to David to appear in person and lead the final attack. The city was captured by David together with a great deal of booty. The king of Israel removed the heavy gold and jeweled crown of Milcom, chief god of Ammon, and placed it on his own head. That act proclaimed to all men that Ammon was conquered. He took the throne away from King Hanun, gave it to a brother of that luckless monarch, and made the country tributary.

Three other enemies felt the might of Israel's great king before the round of conquest was completed. They were Moab, Edom and Amalek. The last was utterly crushed. Never again did this bitterest enemy of Israel raise his head. The Moabites, it appears, had taken advantage of the war with Ammon to attack and plunder the tribe of Reuben. David punished them cruelly, and compelled them to pay tribute.

The territory of Edom stretched south to the Gulf of Akabah, one of the arms of the Red Sea. While David and Joab were fighting the Ammonites, Abishai had marched down and defeated the Edomites in a battle in the Valley of Salt near Beer-sheba. Edom was subjugated, compelled to pay tribute, and David took possession of the Red Sea ports. Some time later, the Edomites revolted and were put down by Joab with great severity. The Edomite king was put to death, but his son Hadad succeeded in escaping to Egypt with some of his followers, where he was well received by the Pharaoh, and, as we shall see, returned to his own country to start fresh trouble in the reign of David's successor.

The result of all these conquests was that David's kingdom became a great empire stretching from the

Euphrates to the Red Sea, from the Mediterranean to the eastern desert. On all the frontiers the nations were either subject to David or they were his allies. Among the latter were the Phoenicians who rejoiced that their enemies, the Philistines, had been vanquished. South of David's empire lay Egypt, which was under-

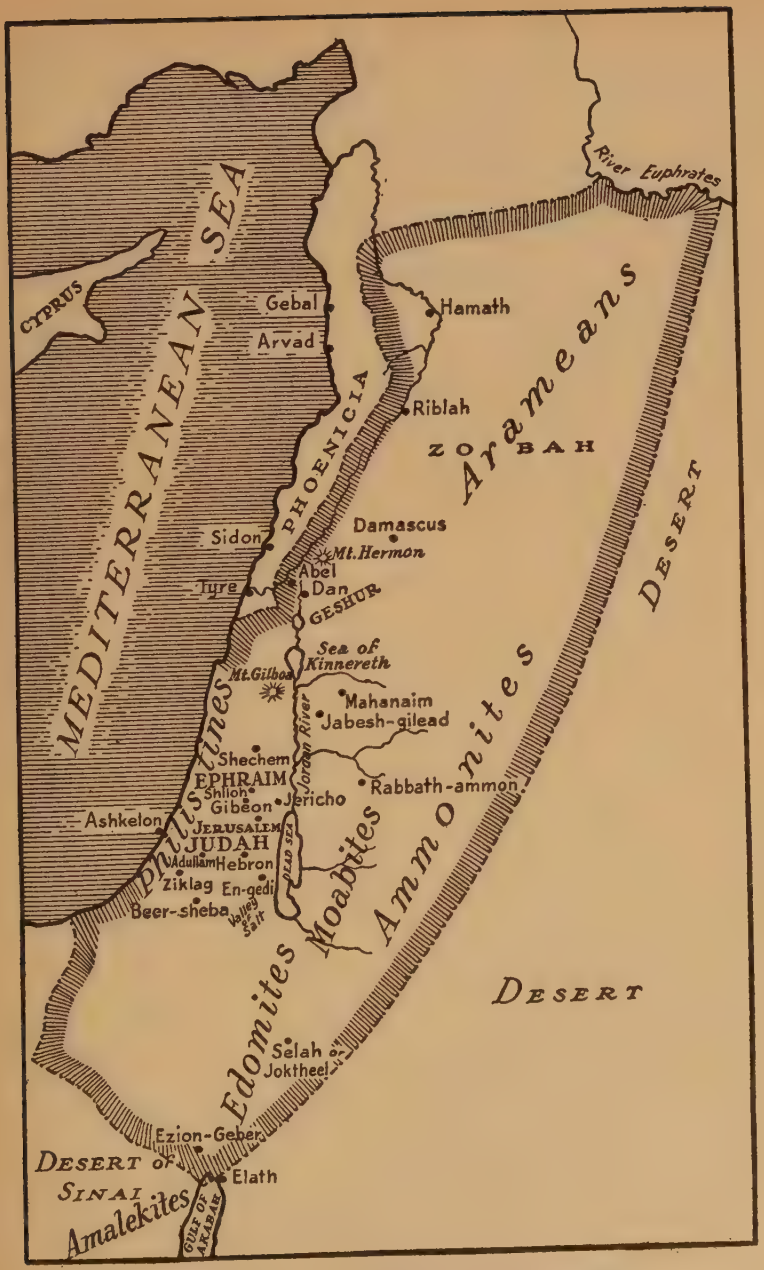


AKABAH, SITE OF THE RED SEA PORTS

The modern place is located about two miles from the head of the Gulf of Akabah and in its neighborhood lay Elath (or Eloth) and Ezion-geber, the ports to which David extended his southern boundary and whence his son Solomon sent his fleets to the fabled land of Ophir (see p. 73). Elath owed its name to the numerous palm-groves in its vicinity.

going a period of decline and was powerless to check his advance. Beyond the Euphrates, the glory of Babylon in the south had become less than a memory, while in the north the advance of the conquering Assyrians was held in check by the Arameans and Phoenicians. No enemy was in sight whom David had to fear.

Twenty-five years before, Saul had died leaving Israel defeated and broken. Now Israel was one of the great powers of the earth.



THE EMPIRE OF DAVID AND SOLOMON

§ 4. *The Later Years of David's Reign Are Marred by Family Feuds and Disturbances of Which Absalom's Revolt Is the Most Serious.*

BRILLIANT though David's achievements were in his foreign enterprises, his domestic affairs present a wholly different picture. In consequence of his own weaknesses and of the jealousies and conflicting ambitions within his household, the later years of his long reign were darkened by sorrows, crimes and rebellions.

The King himself was guilty of one of the greatest crimes of all. He became enamored of a beautiful woman, Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Uriah was an officer in the Israelite army, and while he was absent at the siege of Rabbath-ammon, the King took Bathsheba into his own palace. David's efforts to keep his offense secret were of no avail, and he saw no alternative but to rid himself of Bathsheba's husband. So he sent secret orders to Joab to expose the officer in the front ranks during an engagement with the enemy. Uriah was killed and David made Bathsheba his wife.

It was not an unusual thing for kings to permit themselves shocking deeds of that sort. In Israel, however, there was a living conscience which revolted against wickedness even when practiced by the monarch. The prophet Nathan appeared before David and called on him to pass judgment on a certain man. This man was rich, possessing "exceeding many flocks and herds." And he had a poor neighbor, "who had nothing save one little ewe lamb." This little lamb had grown up with his children, it "had lain in his bosom," and he loved it. Then came a traveler to visit the rich man, who,

instead of taking from his own flocks, took the poor man's lamb and killed it for his visitor. "As the Lord liveth," exclaimed the King, "the man that hath done this deserveth to die." And the prophet Nathan thundered: "Thou art the man!" The King bowed his head in shame and penitence. "I have sinned before the Lord," he answered. David, with all his faults, was no mere Oriental despot who made his whims and passions the law. In his complex nature, lofty and tender impulses stirred powerfully and came to beautifully poetic expression. He acknowledged the higher law even if he did not always observe it.

As his family increased, dissension became rife in his household. Each of his wives was eager to secure the succession to the throne for her son. The oldest son Amnon committed a crime which involved him in a feud with his half-brother Absalom and cost him his life. The victim of the crime was Tamar, Absalom's sister. To avenge her, the high-spirited Absalom invited all the princes to a sheep-shearing festival on his estate, and, in the midst of the drinking and merriment, ordered Amnon to be murdered.

The guilty prince fled to the palace of his maternal grandfather, the king of Geshur, where he remained in exile for three years. But David's heart yearned for his son who was now the oldest and heir to the throne. He allowed himself to be persuaded by Joab to let Absalom return, and restored him to his favor.

But the prince repaid his father's kindness very badly. He set out to depose his father and seize the throne. He laid his plans carefully. In every way he courted the favor of the populace and the leaders, undermining, at the same time, the authority of his father.

They could not, he told the people, expect justice from the King. Absalom apparently knew how to win people over. He was a man of handsome and commanding presence. He appeared in public in regal style and with a grand retinue. "So Absalom," we are told, "stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

Naturally, the prince took full advantage of the discontent which he found to exist in various quarters. In

Underwood and Underwood

WHERE THE VALLEY OF HINNOM MEETS THE VALLEY OF THE KIDRON

The walls of Jerusalem are on the left, the modern village of Siloam on the right. The valley of Hinnom formed the boundary between Benjamin and Judah. It is a narrow gorge running southward on the west of the city and turning east to meet the wider Kidron, shown on the right. The valley of Hinnom became infamous by reason of the atrocious idolatrous rites, including human sacrifices, which were practiced there. Its name, *Ge-hinnom* or *Gehenna,* came to stand for Hell.

Benjamin people still remembered that Saul, whose throne David occupied, had been a Benjaminite. In the north the Ephraimites could not forget that David was a southerner. And even in Judah there were people

who felt that David, now the ruler of a great empire, had estranged himself from his own tribe.

It was, in fact, in Hebron, the center of Judah, where Absalom raised the standard of rebellion by proclaiming himself king. He had obtained his father's permission to go there on the pretext of having to fulfill a religious vow. He took with him many of the leading men of Jerusalem, and he was joined also by Ahithophel, David's counsellor, who had the reputation of being a man of extraordinary wisdom. Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather, and he hated the King for the shame he had brought on his family.

A messenger from the south came and told David of the uprising. The aged king resolved to flee from his capital and seek refuge on the other side of the Jordan. It was a tragic procession that wound its way down towards the river. The King's enemies gloated over what they believed to be his downfall. They followed him with curses and stones. But David was by no means deserted by all his subjects. His bodyguard of six hundred stalwarts was faithful to the end. The Levites, bearing the Ark and headed by the priests Zadok and Abiathar, were going to accompany him, but David persuaded them to remain, and arranged that the two sons of the priests should act as his spies. He also ordered his counsellor Hushai to remain behind in order to frustrate the counsels of Ahithophel.

Absalom came up and took possession of Jerusalem. Then he pursued his father to the Jordan but not soon enough. Ahithophel had urged him to hurry, but Hushai very slyly persuaded him to delay. Chagrined that his advice had not been followed, and foreseeing failure, Ahithophel took his own life. The King's forces, in the

meantime, crossed the Jordan, and Joab was able to recruit new strength among the loyal Israelites on the other side. David established his headquarters at Mahanaim.

In a thick forest east of the Jordan, known as the Forest of Ephraim, the rebels, with Amasa, an uncle of Absalom, in command, came to grips with David's forces commanded by Joab and Abishai. Ittai the Gittite led the bodyguard. The battle was bitter and bloody. Absalom's army was routed and great numbers perished in the jungle. As Absalom sought to escape on his mule, his long hair, of which he was exceedingly vain, caught in the branches of a thorny tree. The rider remained suspended as his animal sped away from under him. Up came Joab and slew the rebel prince. But David had given orders that his son's life should be spared. When the news reached him, he was overcome with grief for his dead and erring son. "Would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" he mourned. It was a victory without joy for David and his followers, and a hatred for the man who had slain his son took lodgment in David's heart.

Now the elders of the tribes, after delaying a little, came to lead David back to his capital and throne. Judah delayed longest, but when the time came to escort the King, the nothern tribes were amazed and enraged to find that the elders of Judah had preceded them. A bitter quarrel arose between Judah and the rest of Israel. North was pitted against south. In the din of dissension, a Benjaminite named Sheba son of Bichri blew the horn and cried: "We have no portion in David; every man to his tents, O Israel!"

It was a fresh rebellion right on the heels of Absalom's. In the hope of conciliating the former rebels,

David had given the command of the army to Amasa, and he now charged him with the task of putting down Sheba. Joab, however, was not a man to be easily displaced. He slew Amasa as he had formerly slain Abner, and took over the operations against the new rebel. He pursued Sheba until he cornered him in the far north in a place called Abel. Joab laid siege to the town, and the people, to save themselves, threw him the head of the rebel leader.

Again the throne of David stood firm. In a magnificent psalm the King poured out his thanks to God for his deliverance. Devoutly he sang:

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
The God who is my rock, in Him I take refuge;
My shield, and my horn of salvation, my high tower and
my refuge;
My Saviour, Thou savest me from violence.
Praised, I cry, is the LORD!

And the King sang further of God's promise to establish his throne for all generations. He sang out of the fulness of his pious heart, and he sang with the passion and imagery of a great poet:

The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spoke to me:
"Ruler over men shall be the righteous
Even he that ruleth in the fear of God,
And as the light of the morning when the sun riseth
A morning without clouds;
When through clear shining after rain,
The tender grass springeth out of the earth."

§ 5. *Having Named Solomon His Successor, David Dies After a Reign of Forty Years, and Is Remembered as Israel's Greatest King.*

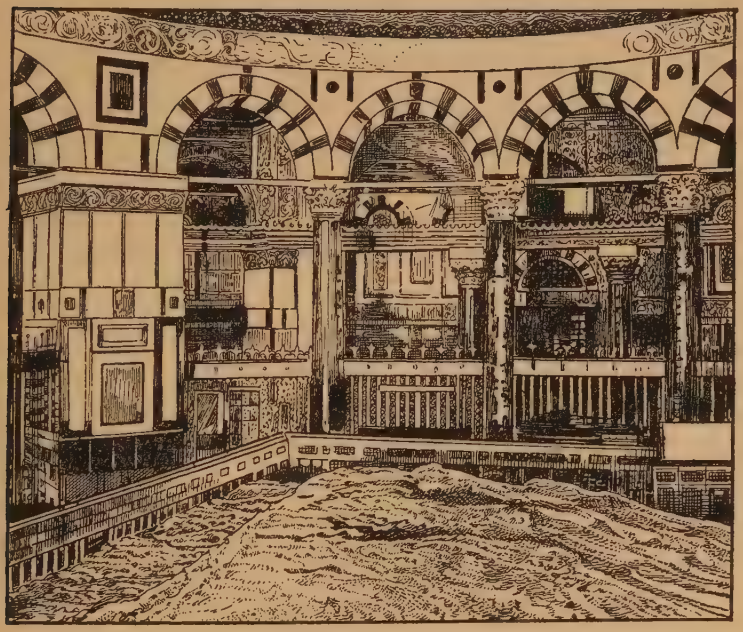
OLD age came stealing on the great king, sapping the strength of his body. But his throne stood firm, for the foreign foes were all subdued, the malcontents within thoroughly cowed, and the house of Saul from which a pretender might have risen up against him, had become practically extinct.

Earlier in his reign David had sought out Meribaal, the son of Jonathan, the friend of his bosom. Meribaal was lame in both feet, for in his childhood his nurse had let him fall to the ground when she was fleeing with him after the Battle of Gilboa. With a magnanimity that accorded with his duty to his dead friend, and, at the same time, with the need of safeguarding his throne, David had ordered the unfortunate cripple's inheritance to be restored to him, and then attached him to his own household. Meribaal, the chronicle records, "did eat continually at the king's table."

Quite different was the fate of seven other descendants of Saul, two sons and five grandsons, who were doomed to atone with their death for cruelties committed by Saul against the Gibeonites whom the mad king had persecuted. There was a prolonged famine in the land, and the Gibeonites, in whom Saul's injustice still rankled, demanded that David give up for punishment the seven descendants of Saul. Only thus, they declared, would the curse be lifted from the land. It was the primitive savage idea that children must be punished for the sins of the fathers. The time to overthrow this

notion had not yet come. It was too deeply imbedded in the popular mind for David to resist it. He had to yield, and the seven unfortunates were hanged.

There came further evils to mar the tranquillity of



WHERE ARAUNAH THE JEBUSITE HAD HIS THRESHING FLOOR

This is a view of the interior of the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem now standing on the spot where Araunah had his threshing-floor and where David's son Solomon later built the Temple. David had bought the site from Araunah for fifty shekels of silver. The rock within the enclosure in the foreground is believed to be the one where the near-sacrifice of Isaac (*Akedah*) took place and where the Holy of Holies of Solomon's Temple was located. Hence, the Mosque of Omar is known also as the Dome of the Rock.

the King's declining years. The land was at one time stricken with pestilence. It happened immediately after a census of all the people had been taken by Joab at David's command. The purpose, apparently, was to de-

termine the military strength of the nation. Perhaps the King was planning a new military enterprise. At any rate, it was regarded as sinful to number the people, and the pestilence was looked upon as God's punishment. So the prophet Gad informed the ruler. David built an altar and offered sacrifices for the cessation of the plague. The spot where he built this altar, the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, is believed to be the site on which David's son Solomon afterwards built the great Temple.

Naturally, as the King grew older, the question as to which of his sons should reign after him became more and more urgent. The eldest living son was Adonijah, and he looked upon himself as the King's successor. He was supported by Joab and the priest Abiathar. Adonijah, to impress the people, surrounded himself with pomp and power. Like Absalom, he rode through the streets with a guard and retinue of horsemen and chariots. "I will be king," he continually announced.

But David had promised his wife Bathsheba that her son, Solomon, would inherit the throne. And Bathsheba was not to be trifled with. She was a woman of great determination, and she had, besides, the support of the prophet Nathan, of the priest Zadok, and of Benaiah, the captain of the King's guard. Thus there were two court parties struggling for mastery.

Adonijah resolved upon a *coup d'état* to secure his succession. Near the fountain of En-rogel, where the valleys of Hinnom and Kidron meet south of the city, he held a grand festival to which he invited all his supporters and all the members of the royal household with the exception of Solomon and his partisans. Amid

feasting and drinking the cry went up: "Long live King Adonijah!"

News of what was happening at En-rogel reached the palace. Bathsheba, spurred on by the prophet Nathan, entered the chamber of the aged monarch. She reminded him of his promise and demanded that he make it public. She was followed by Nathan himself who said to the King: "Hast thou said: 'Adonijah shall reign after me and he shall sit upon my throne?' " David roused himself to his former resolution. He gave orders that Solomon, mounted on the royal mule, be conducted by his guard to the Pool of Gihon, west of the city, and there anointed king over Israel by Nathan and Zadok.

In the midst of their feasting at En-rogel, Adonijah and his followers heard tremendous shouting from the city. They learned soon enough what it meant. The people were hailing Solomon as king. He had been duly anointed and was being led back to sit on his father's throne. Adonijah's party was struck with fear. They dispersed, and Adonijah himself took refuge from his brother's wrath by clinging to an altar. It was a fortunate outcome for the nation, for a bloody civil war was averted.

David could now meet his approaching end peacefully: Solomon was accepted as his successor; the family feud would not break out again after his death. Before he finally went "the way of all the earth," he instructed Solomon to be loyal to the law of Moses, but he could not refrain from advising him to do away with Joab. The King could not forget that the old warrior had murdered Abner and Amasa, and, above all, that he had slain his son Absalom.

So, after a reign of forty years, David the King died. What marvelous changes those forty years had brought! The tribes united, all enemies defeated, the kingdom enlarged into an empire! David had brought Israel safety, power and glory. David had given Israel

TRADITIONAL SITE OF DAVID'S TOMB AT JERUSALEM

This spot is held in special reverence by the Moslems who refuse non-Moslems admission to it. The mosque shown in the picture, which is built over the supposed tomb, is called *Neby Dâûd*, meaning "Prophet David." The spot is located near the Zion Gate or the Gate of David in the south wall of the city. Various other places have been claimed as the true site of David's tomb.

Jerusalem, the city of God. Forgotten were David's faults and sins, forgotten the dreary days of rebellion, civil war and pestilence. Remembered only was David the warrior and conqueror, David the wise ruler, David the sweet singer and servant of the Lord.

As David became more and more a memory, the pride of the nation in its hero-king continued to grow. Only

a descendant of David, the nation felt, could rightfully rule over Israel. Only a descendant of David could play the supreme part of Messiah, or final deliverer. The towering figure of Israel's greatest king has, through all the ages that followed, shone upon its history in a halo of piety and glory.

TOPIC SEVEN: LITERATURE

1. AN EXPLOIT OF DAVID'S *GIBBORIM*

(2 SAMUEL* 5[17]; 23[13-17])

DAVID'S thirty gibborim *or heroes (see p. 9) are listed in 2 Samuel and their bravest deeds recorded. No part of the Bible is so reminiscent of the hero stories of other nations, those of the Iliad, for example, as this account of David's* gibborim.

* The second part of the Book of Samuel (see vol. 1, p. 308, note), commonly referred to as 2 Samuel (Second Samuel), goes on with the story of David's career, beginning with the events after the death of Saul with which 1 Samuel closes.

The contents of 2 Samuel may be roughly divided into three parts. The first (Chapters 1–10) deals with the establishment of David's kingdom and of Jerusalem as his political and religious capital. It includes an account of the civil war, of Abner's defection from Saul's successor and his murder by Joab. The story of the capture of Jerusalem and of the removal thither of the Ark of the Covenant belongs to the same part.

The second part of 2 Samuel (Chapters 11–20) embraces David's foreign wars and domestic disturbances. It includes the story of his crime against Uriah the Hittite, the feud between Amnon and Absalom, of Absalom's rebellion, and the revolt of Sheba the Benjaminite.

The third part of 2 Samuel (Chapters 21–24) consists of a number of miscellaneous appendices of which, as history, the accounts of the execution of Saul's descendants, and of the census and plague are the most important. Chapter 22 is a psalm or song of triumph and thanksgiving uttered by David.

The following selections in 2 Samuel are recommended for additional reading:

a. The Murder of Abner by Joab (Chap. 3)
b. The Ark Is Brought to Jerusalem (Chap. 4)
c. David's Sin against Uriah (Chap. 11)
d. Absalom Recalled from Exile (Chap. 14)
e. Sheba's Rebellion and the Death of Amasa (Chap. 20)
f. David's Song of Praise and Thanksgiving (Chap. 22)

AND when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.[1]

And three of the thirty chief [2] went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam; and the troop of the Philistines were encamped in the valley of Rephaim. And David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem.

And David longed, and said: "Oh that one would give me water to drink of the well of Beth-lehem,[3] which is by the gate!" And the three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; but he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD. And he said: "Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this; shall I drink the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives," [4] therefore he would not drink it.

These things did the three mighty men.

[1] The attack of the Philistines forced David to quit Hebron, where the anointment had taken place, and repair to his former place of refuge, the cave of Adullam.

[2] *i.e.*, chief men: the thirty heroes.

[3] Beth-lehem was David's birthplace, and the water from that particular well must have tasted especially sweet to him.

[4] To David, the water, which the heroes procured at the risk of their lives, seems the same as their blood. He would not, therefore, drink it, but offered it as a sacrifice to God.

2. THE PARABLE OF NATHAN THE PROPHET

(2 Samuel 12 1-10; 13)

THIS is one of the most famous parables in the Bible. The picture of the humble prophet hurling the accusation in the face of the monarch is of intense dramatic force. Note the crushing effect of the words: "Thou art the man!" And David's confession: "I have sinned against the Lord," is, if possible, even more affecting.

AND the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him: "There were two men in one city: the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and reared; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared [5] to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."

And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan: "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this deserveth to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold; [6] because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

And Nathan said to David: "Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives [7] into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that were too little, then would I add unto thee so much more. Wherefore

[5] *i.e.*, he refrained.

[6] "If a man steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it, he shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep"—*Exodus* 21 1

[7] Together with the crown, the harem of a king was taken over by his successor.

hast thou despised the word of the LORD, to do that which is evil in My sight? Uriah the Hittite thou hast smitten with the sword, and his wife thou hast taken to be thy wife, and him thou hast slain with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house;[8] because thou hast despised Me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife."

And David said unto Nathan: "I have sinned against the LORD."

3. DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM ABSALOM

(2 SAMUEL 15 [13-37]; 16 [5-14])

BY GUILE and flattery, Absalom has stolen the hearts of many of his father's subjects, and having gone to Hebron with a large number of followers, has proclaimed himself king. David finds himself compelled to flee from his capital. The story of his flight is a remarkable revelation of his character: his patience and resourcefulness, his piety and forbearance, his fortitude in time of adversity and the personal magnetism which won him so much love and loyalty. The pathos of the simple narrative brings into relief a figure of large and tragic proportions.

AND there came a messenger to David, saying: "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." And David said unto all his servants[9] that were with him at Jerusalem: "Arise, and let us flee; for else none of us shall escape from Absalom; make speed to depart, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword." And the king's servants said unto the king: "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall choose."

And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, that were concubines, to keep the house.

[8] The peace of David's house was marred by bloody family quarrels (see p. 25ff.).

[9] *i.e.*, his ministers and officers, his government.

And the king went forth, and all the people after him; and they tarried in Beth-merhak.[10] And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites;[11] six hundred men that came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite: "Wherefore goest thou also with us? return, and abide with the king;[12] for thou art a foreigner, and also an exile from thine own place. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us, seeing I go whither I may?[13] return thou, and take back thy brethren with thee in kindness and truth."

And Ittai answered the king, and said: "As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, even there also will thy servant be."[14] And David said to Ittai: "Go and pass over." And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him. And all the country wept with a loud voice, as all the people passed over; and as the king passed over the brook Kidron, all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.[15]

[10] *Beth-merhak* means "the house of distance," or "the far house." It was probably the last house on the hill above the brook Kidron (see map p. 10).

[11] The Cherethites, Pelethites and Gittites were a sort of foreign legion, consisting chiefly of Philistines, under command of Ittai the Gittite, and made up David's personal guard.

[12] "The king" here is not David, but the usurper Absalom.

[13] *i.e.*, seeing I have become a fugitive.

[14] Compare Ittai's answer with the answer Ruth gave to Naomi when the latter urged her to desist from following her: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the LORD do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

[15] *i.e.*, the wilderness of Judah. The route followed by David was across the Kidron, up the Mount of Olives, then down towards the Jordan, across a rapidly descending and desolate region.

And, lo, Zadok[16] also came, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God; and they set down the ark of God — but Abiathar[17] went up — until all the people had done passing out of the city. And the king said unto Zadok: "Carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, He will bring me back, and show me both it, and His habitation; but if He say thus: I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him."[18]

The king said also unto Zadok the priest: "Seest thou? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry in the plains of the wilderness, until there come word from you to announce unto me."[19] Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem; and they abode there.

And David went up by the ascent of the mount of Olives, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered, and went barefoot;[20] and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

And one told David, saying: "Ahithophel[21] is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said: "O LORD, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the ascent, where God was wont to be worshipped,[22] behold,

[16] Zadok, whose descent is traced to Aaron, was the founder of the most important priestly family. David's successor, Solomon, made him chief priest, and, until the time of the Maccabees (about 160 B.C.E.), the high priest was drawn from this family.

[17] Abiathar, son of the priest Ahimelech, had escaped from the massacre of his family by Saul, and had taken refuge with David at Adullam.

[18] The Ark, people believed, would insure victory (see vol. 1, p. 252), but David refuses to let it accompany him. He prefers to resign himself completely to God's will. David's decision represents a great step forward in religious progress.

[19] David arranges that the sons of the priests shall act as his spies.

[20] A covered head and bare feet were signs of mourning.

[21] See p. 27.

[22] This was the summit of the Mount of Olives, where, no doubt, there must have been a "high place."

Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent[23] and earth upon his head. And David said unto him: "If thou passeth on with me, then thou wilt be a burden unto me; but if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom: I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant in time past, so will I now be thy servant; then wilt thou defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye shall hear."

So Hushai David's friend came into the city; and Absalom was at the point of coming into Jerusalem.

And when king David came to Bahurim,[24] behold, there came out thence a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out, and kept on cursing as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David; and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed: "Begone, begone, thou man of blood, and base fellow; the LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son; and, behold, thou art taken in thine own mischief, because thou art a man of blood."

Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah[25] unto the king: "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head." And the king said: "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him: Curse David; who then shall say: Wherefore hast thou done so?"

[23] In token of mourning.

[24] Bahurim was probably located in Benjamin not far from the fords of the Jordan.

[25] Abishai, it will be recalled, was a brother of David's general Joab and a nephew of David.

And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants: "Behold, my son, who came forth of my body, seeketh my life; how much more this Benjamite now? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine eye,[26] and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing of me this day."

So David and his men went by the way; and Shimei went along on the hill-side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.

And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary; and he refreshed himself there.

4. THE BATTLE OF THE FOREST OF EPHRAIM

(2 SAMUEL 18; 19[1-9])

THE main point of interest in the story that follows is David's grief over the death of his wayward son. What depth of sorrow is expressed by his simple exclamation: "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!" As a narrative, this is one of the finest that the Bible offers, the leading characters, David, Absalom and Joab, moving through it with word and gesture of life-like precision.

AND David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth the people, a third part under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite.

And the king said unto the people: "I will surely go forth with you myself also." But the people said: "Thou shalt not go forth; for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us; but thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou be ready to succour us out of the city." And the king said unto them: "What seemeth you best I will do."

And the king stood by the gate-side, and all the people went

[26] The original Hebrew is obscure. It may also mean "my affliction."

out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying: "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

So the people went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim.[27] And the people of Israel were smitten there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men. For the battle was there spread over the face of all the country; and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.[28]

And Absalom chanced to meet the servants of David. And Absalom was riding upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth,[29] and his head caught hold of the terebinth, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went on.

And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said: "Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth." And Joab said unto the man that told him: "And, behold, thou sawest it, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have had to give thee ten pieces of silver, and a girdle." And the man said unto Joab: "Though I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying: Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise if I had dealt falsely against mine own life — and there is no matter hid from the king — then thou thyself wouldest have stood aloof."[30] Then said Joab: "I may not tarry thus with thee."

And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the

[27] This was a jungle located somewhere in Gilead, east of the Jordan.

[28] The meaning, no doubt, is that the victims were lost in the jungle and perished there.

[29] At full growth, the terebinth, or turpentine tree, reaches a height of thirty to forty feet.

[30] *i.e.*, had I killed Absalom and were about to be punished by David you, Joab, would do nothing to save me.

terebinth. And ten young men that bore Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.[31]

And Joab blew the horn, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel; for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom, and cast him into the great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones; and all Israel fled every one to his tent. Now Absalom in his life-time had taken and reared up for himself the pillar, which is in the king's dale; for he said: "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called Absalom's monument unto this day.[32]

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok: "Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies." And Joab said unto him: "Thou shalt not be the bearer of tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, forasmuch as the king's son is dead." [33]

Then said Joab to the Cushite: [34] "Go tell the king what thou hast seen." And the Cushite bowed down unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab: "But come what may, let me, I pray thee, also run after the Cushite." And Joab said: "Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou wilt have no reward for the tidings?" "But come what may, [said he,] I will run." And he said unto him: "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain,[35] and overran the Cushite.

Now David sat between the two gates; [36] and the watchman

[31] Apparently Joab's darts had not yet quite despatched the luckless Absalom.

[32] The site of this pillar is usually, though erroneously, identified with the so-called "Absalom's Tomb."

[33] *i.e.*, it will do you no good to be the bearer of evil tidings to the King.

[34] Cush is the same as Ethiopia or the modern Nubia, south of Egypt. The Cushite was probably a negro slave.

[35] *i.e.*, the plain of the Jordan. Ahimaaz ran up the plain, then across to Mahanaim, along an easier route, and beat the Cushite.

[36] "The gates" means, no doubt, the gate-houses from the roof of which the watchman could get to the top of the wall.

went up to the roof of the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said: "If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth." [37] And he came apace, and drew near.

And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called unto the porter, and said: "Behold another man running alone." And the king said: "He also bringeth tidings." And the watchman said: "I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said: "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings."

And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king: "All is well." And he bowed down before the king with his face to the earth, and said: "Blessed be the LORD thy God, who hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king." And the king said: "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And Ahimaaz answered: "When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was." [38] And the king said: "Turn aside, and stand here." And he turned aside, and stood still.

And, behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said: "Tidings for my lord the king; for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee." And the king said unto the Cushite: "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered: "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is."

And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he wept, thus he said: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

And it was told Joab: "Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom." And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people; for the people heard say that day:

[37] David means there is *good* tidings "in his mouth," for if his forces had been defeated and the runner a fugitive from the battle, he would not be alone.

[38] Ahimaaz hasn't the heart or the courage to tell the King the truth.

"The king grieveth for his son." And the people got them by stealth that day into the city, as people that are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.[39]

And the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice: "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

And Joab came into the house to the king, and said: "Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, who this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; in that thou lovest them that hate thee, and hatest them that love thee. For thou hast declared this day, that princes and servants are nought unto thee; for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak to the heart of thy servants; for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry a man with thee this night; and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that hath befallen thee from thy youth until now." [40]

Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying: "Behold, the king doth sit in the gate"; and all the people came before the king.

[39] Let the reader linger a little over this passage and the picture of those victorious soldiers stealing back into the city, their triumph suddenly changed to sorrow when they learn that their king is grieving for his son.

[40] Joab fears, and with good reason, that the sympathy of the soldiers with David will be changed quickly into a feeling of resentment against him for ignoring them and their victory in his grief over the death of their enemy.

5. DAVID BIDS SOLOMON BUILD THE TEMPLE

(1 Chronicles * 28 1-13; 20-21)

THE striking point in the following account of David's final legacy to his son and successor is the reason he gives why God considered him unfit to build His Temple: "Thou art a man of war and hast shed blood." God's Temple must be a house of peace.

AND David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that served the king by course,[41] and the captains of thousands, and the captains of hundreds, and the rulers over all the substance and cattle of the king and of his sons, with the officers, and the mighty men, even all the mighty men of valour, unto Jerusalem.

Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said: "Hear me, my brethren, and my people; as for me, it was in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God;[42] and I had made ready for

* The Book of Chronicles, divided, like the Book of Samuel, into two parts, 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles (First and Second Chronicles) respectively, is the last Book of *Ketubim* or "Writings," the third major division of the Bible. The first and second divisions are respectively the Pentateuch, or *Torah,* and *Nebiim,* or "Prophets."

The Book of Chronicles must have been written in the period of the Second Commonwealth. The author was probably a priest or a Levite. The interpretation of historic events is from the priestly point of view which regarded the Temple worship, particularly the sacrifices, as all-important.

The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles consists of a series of genealogies from Adam to the family of Saul. Chapter 10 begins with the Battle of Gilboa where Saul died, and the rest of 1 Chronicles (chapters 11–29) deals with the reign of David until his death and the accession of Solomon.

The following passages in 1 Chronicles are recommended for additional reading:

a. David's Psalm of Thanksgiving for the Ark (Chap. 16 7-36)
b. Nathan Forbids David to Build the Temple (Chap. 17)
c. David's Song of Praise for the Temple Gifts (Chap. 29 6-19)

[41] *i.e.,* in succession.

[42] "The footstool of our God" probably means the covering of the Ark which was surmounted by the Cherubim (see vol. I, p. 134, ill.).

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the building. But God said unto me: Thou shalt not build a house for My name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood.

"Howbeit the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever; for He hath chosen Judah to be prince,[43] and in the house of Judah, the house of my father, and among the sons of my father He took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel; and of all my sons — for the LORD hath given me many sons — He hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

"And He said unto me: Solomon thy son, he shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be to Me for a son, and I will be to him for a father. And I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do My commandments and Mine ordinances, as at this day. Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God; that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you for ever.

"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it."

Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch [of the temple], and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper rooms thereof, and of the inner chambers thereof, and of the place of the ark-cover;[44] and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, for the courts of the house of the LORD, and for all the chambers round about, for the treasuries of the house of God, and for the treasuries of the hallowed

[43] *i.e.*, chief tribe.

[44] David is represented by the author of Chronicles as the architect of the Temple, although he was disqualified from actually building it.

things; also for the courses of the priests and the Levites,[45] and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

And David said to Solomon his son: "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed; for the LORD God, even my God, is with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD be finished. And, behold, there are the courses of the priests and the Levites, for all the service of the house of God; and there shall be with thee in all manner of work every willing man that hath skill, for any manner of service; also the captains and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment."

6. THE PSALMS*

NO BOOK of the Bible, and, for that matter, nothing in the literature of mankind, has exercised so deep an influence on the souls of men as the book known as Psalms.

[45] *i.e.*, for the accommodation of the priests and the Levites, and to enable them to discharge their functions.

* Psalms is the first Book of the third large division of the Bible, known as *Ketubim* or "Writings," the first two (see vol. 1, p. 212, note), being *Torah* and *Nebiim*. *Ketubim* is sometimes referred to by its Greek name, *Hagiographa,* which means "sacred writings."

The name "Psalms" is derived from the Greek word *psalmos* which means the music of stringed instruments. The Hebrew word *mizmor,* which serves as a title to many of the individual Psalms, also refers to their musical character. Both names are well chosen, for the Psalms were originally sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments in the service of the Temple. The Hebrew title for the Book as a whole, however, is *Tehillim,* meaning "Songs of Praise." In English, the Book is frequently called "the Psalter."

The Psalms, numbering 150, are divided unequally into five parts, each of them being called a Book. The Rabbis have often compared the Five Books of David (the Psalter) to the Five Books of Moses. Scholars have labored hard, but without much success, to arrive at some definite knowledge of the authorship and history of the Psalms. It seems certain that the Psalter is the result of a process of accumulation that went on for centuries and began about the period of David and perhaps earlier in the days of Samuel.

With regard to subject-matter, the Psalms have been divided into three

Its influence among Christians has been even greater than among Jews. In the Psalms, the religious spirit finds its most exalted expression. It is the spirit that rises above sorrow and suffering, even above the doubts that attack the mind, the spirit that leaps to ecstatic joy when beholding the wonders of heaven and earth and the might and loving-kindness of God. It is no wonder that the Book of Psalms has been to men a haven of refuge and solace.

We introduce the Psalms at this point because, according to tradition, they were composed or compiled by David. In fact, 73 of the 150 Psalms that make up the Psalter are in the text itself attributed to him. For David has come down not only as a great ruler, but as a fine musician and an inspired poet.

The selections from the Psalter included here, are, perforce, very limited in number.† Most of them bear, more or less clearly, on definite events in the career of David. A few have been added to illustrate the exalted religious spirit and the beauty of thought and diction of the great poet who composed them.

main groups. These are first, songs of praise, adoration and thanksgiving, exalting God's power over nature and lovingkindness toward men, and expressing gratitude for His favors; second, songs of lamentation or elegies, expressing grief over the sufferings of the righteous, or repentance for sins committed, or praying for forgiveness and help and for the punishment of the wicked; and third, didactic or philosophical Psalms, teaching lessons in right conduct.

† Additional selections, bearing upon the Babylonian Captivity and the Restoration, are given in vol. 3.

I. Psalms Related to Events in David's Life

a. WHEN DAVID FLED BEFORE SAUL

(PSALMS 57)

For the Leader;[46] [A Psalm] of David; When He Fled from Saul, in the Cave.[47]

Be gracious unto me, O God, be gracious unto me,
For in Thee hath my soul taken refuge;
Yea, in the shadow of Thy wings[48] will I take refuge,
Until calamities be overpast.

I will cry unto God Most High;
Unto God that accomplisheth it for me.
He will send from heaven, and save me,
When he that would swallow me up taunteth; *Selah*[49]
God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

My soul is among lions, I do lie down among them that are aflame;
Even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.

Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Thy glory be above all the earth.

They have prepared a net for my steps,
My soul is bowed down;
They have digged a pit before me,
They are fallen into the midst thereof themselves.[50] *Selah*

[46] *i.e.*, the chief musician, or conductor of the Temple choir. This word in the title of a large number of psalms is further proof that they were sung, probably to the accompaniment of musical instruments, in the Temple worship.

[47] The cave referred to is probably the cave of Adullam where David found temporary refuge from the pursuit of Saul (see vol. 1, p. 301).

[48] It should be recalled that in sub-tropical lands the word shadow suggests not gloom, but comfort and shelter (see vol. 1, p. 37).

[49] This word is understood to be a musical notation giving directions to the choir or instruments, perhaps to strike up a louder strain during an interval, or to indulge in a musical flourish.

[50] The psalmist uses the present tense instead of the future to express his strong faith in the downfall of his enemies.

My heart is stedfast, O God, my heart is stedfast;
I will sing, yea, I will sing praises.
Awake, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp;
I will awake the dawn.
I will give thanks unto Thee, O LORD, among the peoples;
I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations.
For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens,
And Thy truth unto the skies.

Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Thy glory be above all the earth.

(PSALMS 142)

Maschil [51] of David, When He Was in the Cave; [52] a Prayer.

With my voice I cry unto the LORD;
With my voice I make supplication unto the LORD.
I pour out my complaint before Him,
I declare before Him my trouble;
When my spirit fainteth within me —
Thou knowest my path —[53]
In the way wherein I walk
Have they hidden a snare for me.
Look on my right hand,[54] and see,
For there is no man that knoweth me;
I have no way to flee;
No man careth for my soul.
I have cried unto Thee, O LORD;
I have said: "Thou art my refuge,
My portion in the land of the living."
Attend unto my cry;
For I am brought very low;
Deliver me from my persecutors;
For they are too strong for me.
Bring my soul out of prison,[55]
That I may give thanks unto Thy name;

[51] The term *maschil* is derived from a word which means "to be wise or skilful." As the title of a psalm, it is most probably a musical term and indicates a complicated or "skilful" accompaniment.

[52] The cave here referred to is believed to be the cave at En-gedi where David spared Saul's life (see vol. 1, p. 303).

[53] *i.e.*, Thou knowest my path to be just, yet have they hidden a snare for me.

[54] The helper was thought of as standing at a man's right hand.

[55] *i.e.*, out of distress.

The righteous shall crown themselves because of me;
For Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.

b. THE KING'S DECLARATION OF POLICY

(PSALMS 101)

A Psalm of David.

I will sing of mercy and justice;
Unto Thee, O LORD, will I sing praises.
I will give heed unto the way of integrity;
Oh when wilt Thou come unto me?[56]
I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart.

I will set no base thing before mine eyes;
I hate the doing of things crooked;
It shall not cleave unto me.
A perverse heart shall depart from me;
I will know no evil thing.

Whoso slandereth his neighbour in secret, him will I destroy;
Whoso is haughty of eye and proud of heart, him will I not suffer.
Mine eyes are upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me;
He that walketh in a way of integrity, he shall minister unto me.

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes.
Morning by morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land;
To cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of the LORD.[57]

c. WHEN THE ARK WAS BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM

(PSALMS 24)

This Psalm is undoubtedly one of the most magnificent in the Psalter. Its beauty will be better appreciated if the reader imagines the choirs in the procession of priests, Levites, and people singing their parts in alternation. The text has here been arranged to indicate one possible antiphonal rendering of this sort.

[56] This question has been interpreted to refer to David's project to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

[57] The "city of the Lord" is, of course, Jerusalem.

A Psalm of David.

First Choir: The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.

Second Choir: For He hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.

First Choir: Who shall ascend into the mountain of the LORD?
And who shall stand in His holy place?

Second Choir: He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not taken My name in vain,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.[58]
He shall receive a blessing from the LORD,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.[59]

First Choir: Such is the generation of them that seek after Him,
That seek Thy face, even Jacob.[60] *Selah*

Chorus of Priests: Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
That the King of glory may come in.

Chorus of Levites: "Who is the King of glory?"

First and Second Choirs: "The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle."

Chorus of Priests: Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
That the King of glory may come in.

Chorus of Levites: "Who then is the King of glory?"

First and Second Choirs: "The LORD of hosts;[61]
He is the King of glory."

[58] This answer to the question: Who shall be worthy to stand before God? brings out the exalted ethical character of the Jewish faith. Not the man who brings sacrifices shall be deemed worthy, but "he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart."

[59] Note that the reward promised the man of clean hands and pure heart is an even greater measure of righteousness.

[60] *i.e.*, the children of Israel.

[61] "LORD of hosts" is taken to mean either "LORD of battles" or "LORD of the hosts of heaven and earth."

(PSALMS 15)

A Psalm of David.

LORD, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle?[62]
Who shall dwell upon Thy holy mountain?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart;[63]
That hath no slander upon his tongue,
Nor doeth evil to his fellow,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour;
In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
But he honoureth them that fear the LORD;
He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;
He that putteth not out his money on interest,[64]
Nor taketh a bribe against the innocent.[65]
He that doeth these things shall never be moved.[66]

d. WHEN THE KING WENT FORTH TO FIGHT HIS ENEMIES

(PSALMS 60)

For the Leader;[67] upon Shushan Eduth;[68] Michtam[69] of David, to Teach;[70] When He Strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and Joab Returned, and Smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt Twelve Thousand.[71]

O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast broken us down;
Thou hast been angry; O restore us.
Thou hast made the land to shake, Thou hast cleft it;
Heal the breaches thereof; for it tottereth.

[62] "Tabernacle" is believed to refer to the tent where the Ark of the Covenant was deposited by David.

[63] See note 58, p. 55.

[64] *i.e.*, on usury.

[65] "Cursed be he that taketh a bribe to slay an innocent person."—*Deuteronomy* 27 25

[66] *i.e.* shall be always serene and secure.

[67] See note 46, p. 52.

[68] *Shushan Eduth* means "Lily of the Testimony." The words no doubt are the name of a melody to which this psalm is directed to be sung.

[69] The meaning of this word is not certain. Some take it to mean "a golden song," others claim that, like *maschil* (see note 51, p. 53), it refers to the musical character of the composition.

[70] *i.e.*, to be learned by heart.

[71] See p. 19 and p. 21.

Thou hast made Thy people to see hard things;
Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering.[72]

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee,
That it may be displayed because of the truth. *Selah*
That Thy beloved may be delivered,
Save with Thy right hand, and answer me.

God spoke in His holiness, that I would exult;
That I would divide Schechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.
Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim also is the defence of my head;
Judah is my sceptre.
Moab is my washpot;
Upon Edom do I cast my shoe;
Philistia, cry aloud because of me![73]

Who will bring me into the fortified city?[74]
Who will lead me unto Edom?

Hast not Thou, O God, cast us off?
And Thou goest not forth, O God, with our hosts.

Give us help against the adversary;
For vain is the help of man.
Through God we shall do valiantly;
For He it is that will tread down our adversaries.

e. WHEN DAVID FLED FROM ABSALOM

(PSALMS 3)

A Psalm of David, When He Fled from Absalom His Son.

LORD, how many are mine adversaries become!
Many are they that rise up against me.
Many there are that say of my soul:[75]
"There is no salvation for him in God." *Selah*

[72] *i.e.*, wine which causes the drinker to stagger. These lines obviously refer to a serious reverse of which there is no record in the annals of David's reign.

[73] The places mentioned embrace David's possessions and conquests. Shechem represents the west of the Jordan, Succoth the east. Likewise, Gilead and Manasseh are on the east, Ephraim and Judah on the west. Moab is contemptuously described as the pot where the conqueror washes his feet. The shoe cast upon Edom may refer to a custom of throwing one's shoe upon a piece of land to denote possession.

[74] "The fortified city" must be Joktheel or Petra (see map p. 23).

[75] The Hebrew word *nefesh*, translated "soul," really means more than soul. It embraces the entire self, body as well as soul.

But Thou, O LORD, art a shield about me;
My glory, and the lifter up of my head.
With my voice I call unto the LORD,
And He answereth me out of His holy mountain. *Selah*

I lay me down, and I sleep;
I awake, for the LORD sustaineth me.
I am not afraid of ten thousands of people,[76]
That have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God;
For Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek,
Thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked.

Salvation belongeth unto the LORD;
Thy blessing be upon Thy people. *Selah*

(PSALMS 63)

A Psalm of David, When He Was in the Wilderness of Judah.[77]

O God, Thou art my God, earnestly will I seek Thee;
My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee,
In a dry and weary land, where no water is.
So have I looked for Thee in the sanctuary,[78]
To see Thy power and Thy glory.

For Thy lovingkindness is better than life;
My lips shall praise Thee.
So will I bless Thee as long as I live;
In Thy name will I lift up my hands.

My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness;
And my mouth doth praise Thee with joyful lips;
When I remember Thee upon my couch,
And meditate on Thee in the night-watches.

For Thou hast been my help,
And in the shadow of Thy wings[79] do I rejoice.
My soul cleaveth unto Thee;
Thy right hand holdeth me fast.

[76] The numbers given are borne out by the extent of Absalom's rebellion, which forced David to flee from his capital.

[77] Before crossing the Jordan to Mahanaim which he made his headquarters (see p. 27f.).

[78] The sanctuary, no doubt, refers to the tabernacle where David had deposited the Ark of the Covenant.

[79] See note 48, p. 52.

But those that seek my soul, to destroy it,
Shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth.
They shall be hurled to the power of the sword;
They shall be a portion for foxes.
But the king[80] shall rejoice in God;
Every one that sweareth by Him shall glory;
For the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

II. Psalms of Praise and Adoration

More than any others, the Psalms like those that follow give the Book its unique and exalted character. The purity of the lyric strain that runs through them, and, above all, the sweep of cosmic emotion stand unsurpassed in the entire realm of poetic utterance. The facts of astronomy and other sciences will never dull the thrill which these Psalms are capable of giving.

a. GOD'S GLORY POURED OUT ON MAN

(Psalms 8)

For the Leader; upon the Gittith.[81] A Psalm of David.

O Lord,[82] our Lord,
How glorious is Thy name in all the earth!
Whose majesty is rehearsed above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou founded strength,[83]
Because of Thine adversaries;
That Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I behold Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which Thou hast established;
What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that Thou thinkest of him?
Yet Thou hast made him but little lower than the angels,

[80] David speaks of himself in the third person.

[81] The name *Gittith* may refer to a musical instrument or to the melody of a vintage song to which this psalm was to be sung.

[82] The Hebrew word which is here and everywhere else translated "Lord" is YHWH, formerly rendered into English as "Jehovah," but now as Yahweh (see vol. 1, p. 111, note 13).

[83] The meaning is not clear. Prof. Charles F. Kent translates the line: "At the cry of babes and sucklings," *i.e.*, in response to the cry of the weakest.

And hast crowned him with glory and honour.
Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet:
Sheep and oxen, all of them,
Yea, and the beasts of the field;
The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea;
Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord,
How glorious is Thy name in all the earth!

b. THE GLORY OF GOD IN NATURE AND IN HIS TORAH

(PSALMS 19)

For the Leader. A Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God,
And the firmament showeth His handiwork;
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night revealeth knowledge;
There is no speech, there are no words,
Neither is their voice heard.[84]
Their line[85] is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.
In them hath He set a tent for the sun,
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.
His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it;
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.[86]

The law of the LORD[87] is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

[84] These six lines offer an excellent example of parallelism, the distinguishing mark of Hebrew versification. The second line repeats and elaborates the thought of the first.

[85] The word "line" is unfortunate. The word "voice" (assuming the Hebrew text to be defective) would make the meaning clear: Day and Night have each a message. Their speech, it is true, is not heard. Yet their voice is understood "through all the earth."

[86] The preceding lines conjure up a cosmic vision of incomparable beauty. They have been the inspiration of great composers, among them Beethoven in his glorious song "The Heavens Are Declaring."

[87] The vision of the poet swerves suddenly from the outer world to the inner, from nature to God's law.

The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever;
The ordinances of the LORD are true, they are righteous altogether;
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
Moreover by them is Thy servant warned;
In keeping of them there is great reward.

Who can discern errors?
Clear Thou me from hidden faults.
Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins,
That they may not have dominion over me; then shall I be faultless,
And I shall be clear from great transgression.
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before Thee,
O LORD, my Rock, and my Redeemer.[88]

c. GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

(PSALMS 23)

This Psalm is generally regarded as the most beautiful of all. It is certainly the most popular. A more perfect expression of spiritual serenity it would be impossible to find. The Psalm falls naturally into three parts. In the first, the Lord is the good shepherd who leads His flock to grassy meadows and springs of water. In the second, He is the trusty guide who guards His faithful against all dangers. In the third, He is the gracious host who spreads a sumptuous banquet before His guest.

A Psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd;[89] I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;[90]

[88] The poet ends with a prayer to be kept pure and free from transgression.

[89] For the origin and significance of the shepherd concept, see p. 91.

[90] See note 75, p. 57. There is a complete blending of the physical and the spiritual.

He guideth me in straight paths for His name's sake.[91]
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff,[92] they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;[93]
Thou hast anointed my head with oil;[94] my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

d. THE BEAUTY AND MIGHT OF GOD'S HOLINESS

(PSALMS 29)

A Psalm of David.

Ascribe unto the LORD, O ye sons of might,[95]
Ascribe unto the LORD glory and strength.
Ascribe unto the LORD the glory due unto His name;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;[96]
The God of glory thundereth,

[91] This line in the Revised Version (the translation of the Bible issued in 1885 and based on the Authorized Version, the latter being the translation completed in 1611 under command of James I and known also as the King James Version) reads as follows:

He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Here again the physical and the spiritual are blended. "For His name's sake" means in order to vindicate His own nature which is compounded of righteousness.

[92] Both implements were part of the shepherd's equipment, the first, slung at the side, was a weapon; the second was an aid in walking and in directing the flock.

[93] *i.e.*, though enemies surround me, I feast and am unafraid.

[94] The perfect host provided his guest with oil which was used as a cosmetic.

[95] *i.e.*, ye angels.

[96] A thunderstorm comes from the sea. What follows is a magnificent description of the storm, the thunder and lightning, the trees snapping in the forest, the very mountains quaking, the beasts stricken with panic. This psalm has been called by the Biblical scholar Franz Delitzsch (1813–1890) "the Psalm of the Seven Thunders."

Even the LORD upon many waters.
The voice of the LORD is powerful;
The voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars;
Yea, the LORD breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.
He maketh them also to skip like a calf;
Lebanon and Sirion[97] like a young wild-ox.
The voice of the LORD heweth out flames of fire.[98]
The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness;
The LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve,[99]
And strippeth the forests bare;
And in His temple all say: "Glory."

The LORD sat enthroned at the flood;[1]
Yea, the LORD sitteth as King for ever.
The LORD will give strength unto His people;
The LORD will bless His people with peace.[2]

e. THE WISDOM AND GLORY OF GOD MANIFEST IN HIS WORKS

(PSALMS 104)

This Psalm should be compared with the story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis (vol. 1, p. 47 ff.). The account in Genesis is epic; here it is lyric.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.
O LORD my God, Thou art very great;
Thou art clothed with glory and majesty.
Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment,
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
Who layest the beams of Thine upper chambers in the waters,
Who makest the clouds Thy chariot,
Who walkest upon the wings of the wind;

[97] Sirion is another name for Mount Hermon.

[98] The picture is of thunder crashing through the lightning.

[99] The fear inspired by a thunderstorm has been known to make animals give birth prematurely.

[1] The great flood in the days of Noah.

[2] The last two lines are like the sudden appearance of the sun after the storm.

Who makest winds Thy messengers,
The flaming fire Thy ministers.[3]

Who didst establish the earth upon its foundations,
That it should not be moved for ever and ever;
Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a vesture;
The waters stood above the mountains.
At Thy rebuke they fled,
At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away —
The mountains rose, the valleys sank down —
Unto the place which Thou hadst founded for them;[4]
Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass over,
That they might not return to cover the earth.

Who sendest forth springs into the valleys;
They run between the mountains;[5]
They give drink to every beast of the field,
The wild asses quench their thirst.
Beside them dwell the fowl of the heaven,
From among the branches they sing.
Who waterest the mountains from Thine upper chambers;
The earth is full of the fruit of Thy works.

Who causest the grass to spring up for the cattle,
And herb[6] for the service of man;
To bring forth bread out of the earth,
And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,
Making the face brighter than oil,
And bread that stayeth[7] man's heart.
The trees of the LORD have their fill,

[3] For a full understanding of the lines that precede and follow, the reader should recall the ideas then prevalent as to the construction of the universe. The earth was thought of as resting upon an abyss of waters, the heavens as a vault covering the earth like a tent or "curtain" and also surrounded by water. God's abode, or "upper chambers," rose above the upper waters. Of course, these ideas are not in accord with astronomic facts, but their unscientific character does not diminish either the spiritual force or poetic beauty of the psalm.

[4] *i.e.*, for the waters. "The mountains rose, the valleys sank down" is parenthetical.

[5] These "valleys" are the wadies that are dry in summer, but become transformed into torrents by the winter rains.

[6] "Herb" includes every sort of plant.

[7] *i.e.*, strengthens.

The cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted;
Wherein the birds make their nests;
As for the stork, the fir-trees are her house.
The high mountains are for the wild goats;
The rocks are a refuge for the conies.

Who appointedst the moon for seasons;[8]
The sun knoweth his going down.
Thou makest darkness, and it is night,
Wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their food from God.
The sun ariseth, they slink away,
And couch in their dens.
Man goeth forth unto his work
And to his labour until the evening.

How manifold are Thy works, O LORD!
In wisdom hast Thou made them all;
The earth is full of Thy creatures.
Yonder sea, great and wide,
Therein are creeping things innumerable,
Living creatures, both small and great.
There go the ships;
There is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to sport therein.
All of them wait for Thee,
That Thou mayest give them their food in due season.
Thou givest it unto them, they gather it;
Thou openest Thy hand, they are satisfied with good.
Thou hidest Thy face, they vanish;
Thou withdrawest their breath, they perish,
And return to their dust.
Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created;
And Thou renewest the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure for ever;
Let the LORD rejoice in His works!
Who looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke.

I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have any being.

[8] *i.e.*, for measuring time, the phases of the moon being the basis of the month.

Let my musing[9] be sweet unto Him;
As for me, I will rejoice in the LORD.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Hallelujah.[10]

[9] The poet himself describes his song as a "musing" or "meditation." We must imagine him standing on some elevation whence he contemplates God's works in nature and muses on their grandeur and the wisdom of the Creator.

[10] *Hallelujah* is made up of two Hebrew words meaning "Praise ye the Lord."

TOPIC EIGHT

Solomon the Magnificent

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Solomon the Magnificent

§ 1. *David's Son Solomon, Famous for His Wisdom and Splendor, Assures His Crown and Sets Up a Firm Government.*

§ 2. *The Forty Years of His Reign Are a Period of Peace Secured by Alliances with Foreign Countries and Diplomatic Marriages.*

§ 3. *Solomon Builds Many Splendid Edifices in Jerusalem, the Most Important Being the Temple on Mount Zion.*

§ 4. *The Israelites, in the Meantime, Had Become a Nation of Small Farmers, though Shepherding Predominated in the South.*

§ 5. *With All His Greatness, the People Harbor Many Grievances Against Solomon, and a Certain Jeroboam Attempts a Rebellion.*

TOPIC EIGHT: LITERATURE

1. The Struggle between Solomon and Adonijah (1 *Kings* 1^{5-53}).
2. Solomon's Dream (1 *Kings* 3^{4-15}).
3. The Wisdom of the Young King (1 *Kings* 3^{16-28}).
4. The Dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 8).
5. Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (1 *Kings* 10^{1-13}).
6. Solomon and Jeroboam (1 *Kings* 11^{26-43}).

TOPIC EIGHT

Solomon the Magnificent

§ 1. *David's Son Solomon, Famous for His Wisdom and Splendor, Assures His Crown and Sets Up a Firm Government.*

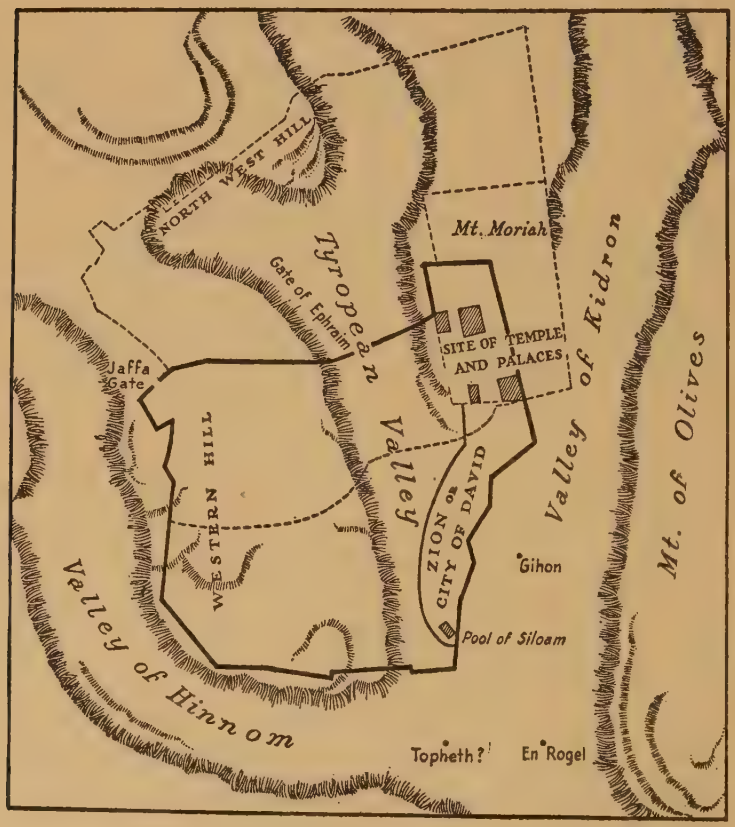
"AND Solomon," says the chronicle, "sat upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established firmly." What David had sown in struggle and sorrow, his son Solomon reaped in peace and glory. It was a splendid harvest and Solomon was an excellent reaper.

In the long procession of Hebrew monarchs, the new ruler stands supreme in power and regal splendor. History and legend have endowed him with marvelous gifts of which his wisdom is the most famous. The wisdom of Solomon has become proverbial. We are told that God once appeared to him in a dream and called on him to ask for what he thought was the best thing on earth, and it would be granted him. Solomon asked neither for long life, nor riches, nor the death of his enemies. He asked for "a wise and understanding heart," and obtained it.

He was eager for wisdom and understanding so as to be able to execute justice. His fame as a wise judge spread among all men. An illustration of his penetrating wisdom is afforded by the well-known story of how he discovered which of two women was the mother

of an infant that was claimed by both. He ordered the child to be cut in half, whereupon the true mother implored him to let the other woman have it.

The ruler was wise and just, and his reign was a period of peace and happiness. Thus did later genera-



JERUSALEM IN THE REIGN OF SOLOMON

tions think back on the days of Solomon. "Judah and Israel," says the chronicle, "were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry." And again: "And Judah and

Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon."

Nevertheless, there is a reverse side to this picture, a seamy side to the gorgeous garment. The King had his faults and weaknesses. He loved pomp and luxury. He loved power and the parade of power. To satisfy his passion for splendor he made exorbitant and galling demands on his people. He surrounded himself with a luxurious court and married foreign women who brought their idolatrous cults into the land. He lived not only above his people, but aloof from them and without sympathy with them. Solomon was, on the whole, a typical Oriental autocrat.

In the true manner of the Oriental autocrat, he began his reign by ridding himself of his former rival and his rival's chief supporters. Adonijah incurred his wrath by demanding the beautiful Abishag, who had waited on David in his old age, for his wife. The demand cost him his life. The gnarled old warrior Joab, at Solomon's command, was slain by Benaiah, the captain of the guard. Abiathar was banished from Jerusalem, and the office of high priest was held by Zadok alone. Solomon even found a pretext for ordering the execution of a certain Shimei who was related to the family of Saul.

Having thus removed every possible menace to his throne, Solomon proceeded to set up his governmental machine. He retained the establishment of his father, and improved upon it. He kept some of David's ministers in their posts, and appointed the sons of others to succeed their fathers. Benaiah, the ready instrument of his vengeance, became the commander-in-chief of the

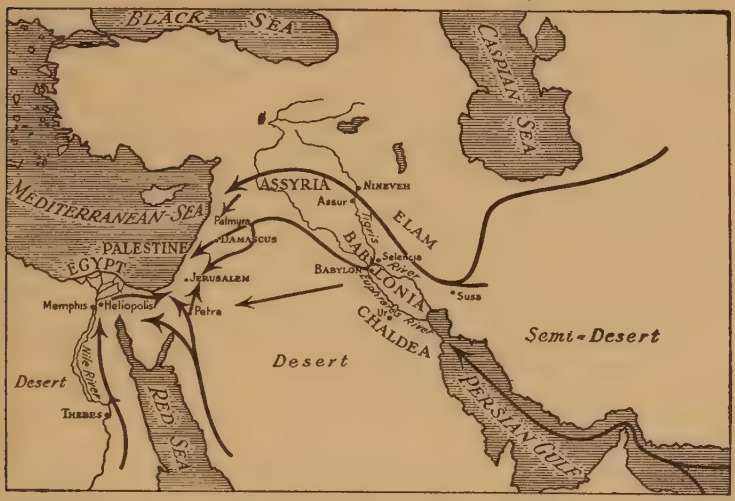
army. Zadok, and after him his son Azariah, were the chief priests. The *mazkir* or recorder was Jehoshaphat who had held the same position under David. Another minister whom Solomon retained was Adoniram, who was chief collector of the revenue, or minister of finance. There were other ministers, including a chief minister and principal adviser in the person of Zabud, a son of the prophet Nathan; two scribes; a steward of the palace; and one who was "over the officers," another son of Nathan, named Azariah.

These officers or *nizabim,* as they were called, were exceedingly important functionaries. There were twelve of them, and they were charged with the duty of obtaining the supplies necessary for the King's household. The country was divided into twelve districts over each one of which an officer was placed who obtained a month's supplies every year. The division was not made by tribes, for Solomon was eager to remove tribal distinctions and develop the sentiment of nationality. The territory of the tribe of Judah does not, however, appear among the districts. Judah, apparently, occupied a privileged position. Needless to say, the *nizabim,* who were fiscal agents or tax collectors, were not in favor with the people. Nor was the system rendered more popular by the fact that Judah was exempted.

But the King's revenues were not limited to what he obtained through the twelve officers. His wealth continued to grow as a result of the commerce he carried on by land and sea. Up and down the land plodded his own caravans and those of other nations. He improved the old roads and built new ones through the hilly country. The merchants of other nations paid him tolls for the use of these roads. From Egypt he bought

great droves of horses which he sold in other lands as far north as the Euphrates.

Still more wealth came to Solomon from across the seas. With the assistance of Hiram, king of Tyre, who had been a great friend of David and who now renewed his alliance with David's son, Solomon built a large fleet of ships at the port of Ezion-geber on the Gulf of



THE TRADE ROUTES THAT LED TO PALESTINE

Akabah. The sailors were Phoenicians from Tyre, and Israelites from the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali who dwelt near the sea. The fleet sailed down the Red Sea and got as far as Ophir, which, some believe, was in India. Two years later the fleet returned and put in again at Ezion-geber. And soon afterwards, there streamed into Jerusalem a caravan of camels laden with the wealth and luxury of the Far East: gold, silver and pearls; ivory and sandal-wood; ebony and spices. They even brought peacocks and monkeys to help the wives of the

King and the other rich ladies of Jerusalem while away their days of idleness.

With his central administration in Jerusalem well-organized and well-financed, he established local centers of administration in various parts of the country. These were the so-called "store cities" which served as supply stations for his caravans and as military depots and strongholds. Thus he fortified Hazor and Megiddo in the north, Beth-horon near Jerusalem, Gezer in the south, and other places.

To the splendid military machine which he inherited from his father, Solomon added a great many horses and chariots. For the first time cavalry became an important branch of the army. In different parts of the land he established posts for his horsemen and chariots, an effective method, no doubt, for policing the country.

Thus did Solomon the wise secure his throne, organize his government, establish his revenues and assure his authority over the entire land.

§ 2. *The Forty Years of His Reign Are a Period of Peace Secured by Alliances with Foreign Countries and Diplomatic Marriages.*

WITH all his riches and power, Solomon was not a warlike king. He was much more at home in the luxury of the court than in the rugged life of the military camp. Besides, no enemy rose up against him who represented a serious menace. The forty years of his reign were a period of peace such as Israel had never known before.

Nevertheless, Solomon was compelled to give attention to two enemies who appeared in the lands annexed by his father north and south. In the north, a certain

Rezon had succeeded in assembling the remnants of the army of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, whom David had defeated. Rezon captured Damascus and held it. He made it the center of a new Aramean kingdom and carried on a continuous petty warfare against Solomon. In the south, the adversary was Hadad, the Edomite prince, who, as we saw, had escaped to Egypt when his country was being overrun by Joab. Hadad returned to his native land as soon as he got news of the death of David and Joab, reconquered a part, at least, of Edom from Solomon and ruled over it. The port of Ezion-geber, however, remained in Solomon's hands.

The success of Rezon in the north and of Hadad in the south bear testimony to the fact that David's son was not gifted with the vigor and military genius of his father. Solomon appears to have made no effort to reconquer Damascus. As for Edom, he seems to have been content with possession of his Red Sea port. War was not to Solomon's taste. He preferred to maintain his power through peace, that is, by making alliances with his neighbors.

His two most important alliances were with Phoenicia and Egypt. In the case of Phoenicia, as we have seen, he renewed the friendship which had existed between the king of Tyre and his father. But Solomon greatly extended his relations with his ally with the result that the Phoenicians, as we shall see, played a leading rôle in his most memorable undertakings.

The alliance with Egypt added enormously to Solomon's prestige. That land, since the period of the Exodus, had had an exceedingly checkered career. The last rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty, to which had

belonged the great Rameses II and his son Merneptah* went down in rebellions, civil wars and confusion, in the course of which Egypt became a prey to Syrian invaders.

THE GEZER CALENDAR

This limestone plaque was found at Gezer on the coastal plain near Jaffa. It contains a list of the months of the year, each month being described by the agricultural labor appropriate to it. It reads in part as follows: "A month of fruit-harvest. A month of sowing. A month of after-grass. A month of flax-harvest. A month of barley-harvest, etc." The characters are those of the Phoenician alphabet used by the Hebrews, Moabites, Canaanites, and other ancient Semitic peoples (see page 140).

Of the Twentieth Dynasty, established about 1200 B.C.E., the greatest ruler was Rameses III. He succeeded in holding in check the Lybians, the Philistines and the many other enemies of Egypt. But the priesthood, especially that of Amon, was growing in wealth and power, and reduced the authority of the successors of Rameses III to a mere shadow.

While, under the Judges, the Israelites were struggling against their numerous foes, the kings of the Twenty-first Dynasty were reigning at Tanis in the Delta, with a line of priestly rulers holding sway in the south. Egypt was too weak to make her power felt in Palestine until toward the very end of this Dynasty, when the Pharaoh who ruled in Tanis, while Solomon ruled in Jerusalem, invaded southern Palestine and captured the city of Gezer. This city, situated in the former territory of the tribe of Dan, was still being held by the Canaanites. The Pharaoh, who was probably aided

* See vol. 1, p. 93 ff.

by the Philistines, razed the city to the ground and slaughtered the inhabitants.

But it was Solomon who profited most from this expedition of the Egyptians. For, in cementing his alliances with foreign powers, Solomon followed the customary practice of intermarrying with the foreign royal family. So he took to wife a daughter of the Pharaoh and received the city of Gezer, which he afterwards rebuilt and fortified, as his dowry.

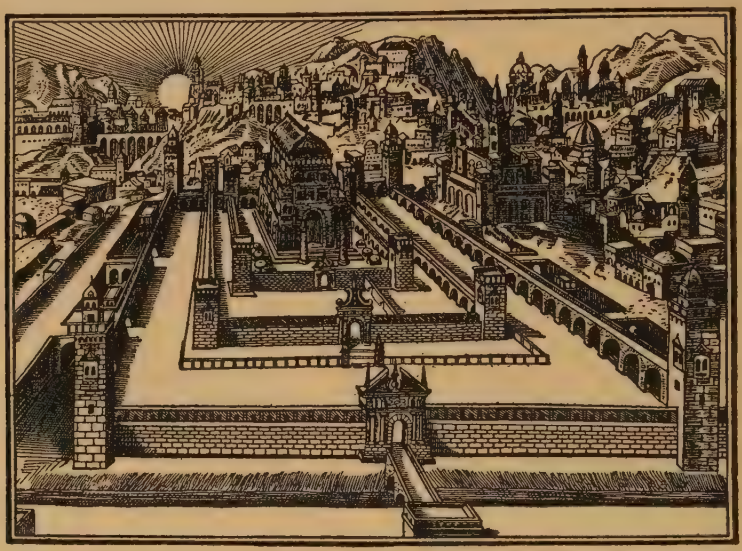
Solomon took a great fancy to this method of making alliances by diplomatic marriages. He brought to his harem other princesses from neighboring countries, from Moab, Edom and Ammon, from Phoenicia and the land of the Hittites.

These marriages, no doubt, helped to bring peace but they brought other things which were not so desirable. Each princess brought her own idols to Jerusalem, and Solomon thought it right to let his wives continue the religious practices to which they were accustomed. He was especially indulgent to the daughter of the Pharaoh, who, it would seem, was his favorite wife. But gradually the strange forms of worship thus tolerated by the King began to influence the people. Solomon himself, devoted though he was to the God of Israel, was not able altogether to resist them.

Solomon's alliances and marriages incited his natural love of pomp and magnificence. Some of his wives, the Egyptian princess in particular, came from lands where they had enjoyed the luxuries and refinements of age-old civilizations. Did it befit the Israelite monarch that they should live less sumptuously in Jerusalem than they had lived in Tanis or Tyre? No, the daughter of the

Pharaoh should have as fine a palace as Solomon could build for her.

Moreover, the city of Jerusalem must reflect the power and splendor of Israel's king. Its fortifications



From the Jewish Encyclopedia.

THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON THE MAGNIFICENT

This is a front view of the Temple, its courts and surrounding structures, as pictured by an artist in a Passover Haggadah which was printed at Amsterdam in 1695.

should make it impregnable. It should have a Temple dedicated to the God of Israel, as well as palaces and other buildings, which should make it a thing of wonder and delight in the eyes of all men.

§ 3. *Solomon Builds Many Splendid Edifices in Jerusalem, the Most Important Being the Temple on Mount Zion.*

SOLOMON therefore set out to strengthen and beautify his capital. For many years the work of construction continued. Armies of laborers were employed in the quarries, forests, foundries, and on the sites of the buildings. When the work was completed Jerusalem was no longer a rude fortress on a hill. It was a magnificent city, the fame of which spread throughout the Oriental world.

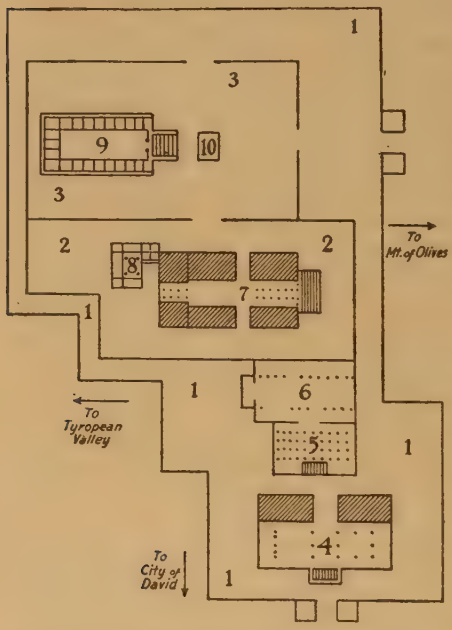
Solomon, moreover, accomplished what his father was prevented from undertaking by the ceaseless warfare he had to wage. Solomon built a Temple to the God of Israel, the most celebrated and most gorgeous of all his edifices.

To begin with, Solomon completed the wall around the city which David had left unfinished. The eastern hill or Zion, the Tyropean Valley, and the western hill were now covered with houses. Solomon's wall made a circuit of this area from Mount Zion in a nearly straight line to a point approximately where the Jaffa gate is to-day located, then along the west, south and east skirting the valley of Hinnom and the valley of the Kidron.

With his defenses secured, the work of internal construction proceeded apace. For the general site of his buildings, he chose the northern part of Mount Zion, or the City of David, opposite the Mount of Olives. There he reared his palaces and arsenal. There, on the site of the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, which David had purchased, believed to be the spot on

which the Mosque of Omar stands to-day, he built his Temple.

The work, of course, required a vast amount of materials and labor, both skilled and unskilled. It could not have been accomplished without the assistance of the King's Phoenician allies. Under a treaty which Solomon concluded with Hiram, king of Tyre, the latter provided the king of Israel with two essential things which he lacked: skilled artisans and timber. The Phoenician craftsmen were the best dressers of stone, carvers of wood and molders of metal.



PLAN OF THE TEMPLE AND OTHER ROYAL BUILDINGS ERECTED BY SOLOMON

According to Stade

1. Great court. 2. Middle court. 3. Temple court. 4. House of the Forest of Lebanon. 5. Hall of Columns. 6. Hall of Justice. 7. Palace. 8. Harem. 9. The Temple. 10. Brazen Altar.

The timber which went into Solomon's buildings was furnished by Hiram from the forests of Lebanon. The cedars and fir-trees of those forests offered the best timber in the world. Thirty thousand Israelites, supervised by skilled Phoenicians, were employed in shifts of ten thousand to fell the trees on the slopes of Lebanon. The logs were then hauled to the sea, where they were bound into rafts,

floated down the coast as far as Jaffa, and hauled up the hills to the capital.

The stone came from quarries near Jerusalem. Great blocks of hard limestone measuring eight and ten cubits*

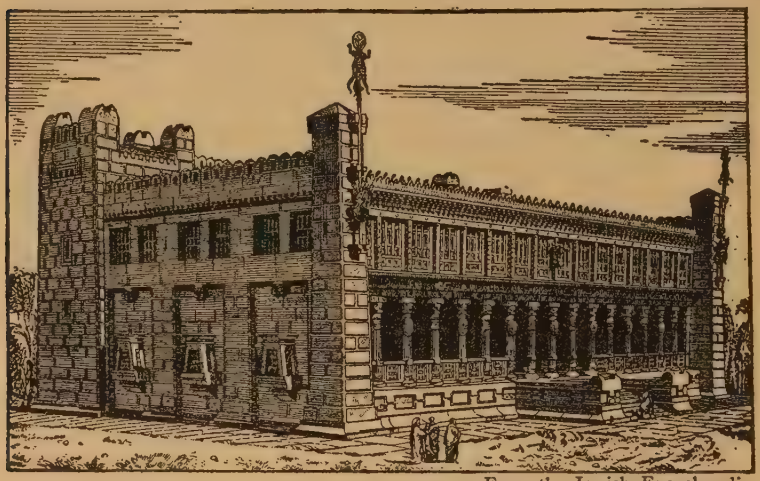
CEDARS OF LEBANON

This evergreen, which reaches a height of 80 to 100 feet, is the most beautiful tree in Syria and Palestine. Its timber is resinous and very durable, making it a most valuable building material. The prophet Isaiah called this tree "the glory of Lebanon." To-day, only a small grove in Syria, enclosed by the government, is all that is left of the ancient magnificent cedar forests.

were hewed from these pits by Canaanite laborers whom Solomon compelled to toil for his glory. The blocks were dressed and beveled by Phoenician craftsmen and dragged up to Mount Zion. In the valley of the Jordan, foundries were set up where the implements and ornaments of bronze were cast. Besides wood, stone and bronze, a great deal of gold and ivory was lavished on Solomon's splendid structures.

* Twelve to fifteen feet.

It was not long before the dainty daughter of the Pharaoh had a palace of her own in Jerusalem which could compare with the gorgeous edifices of her native land. On one side of it rose the harem where Solomon's other wives lived, and on the other the palace of the King. Near the palace rose an impressive Hall of Justice, paneled with carved cedar-wood from floor to ceiling. There stood Solomon's throne, inlaid with gold and



From the Jewish Encyclopedia.

THE HOUSE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON

This is a picture of Solomon's arsenal as restored by the French scholar Charles Chipiez (d. 1901).

ivory. Six steps led up to it and on each step two carved lions stood facing each other. The arms of the throne also rested on the heads of lions. From this gorgeous throne Solomon dispensed justice and gave audiences. There was a large pillared vestibule before the throne room known as the Hall of Columns, and behind it were the apartments of the King.

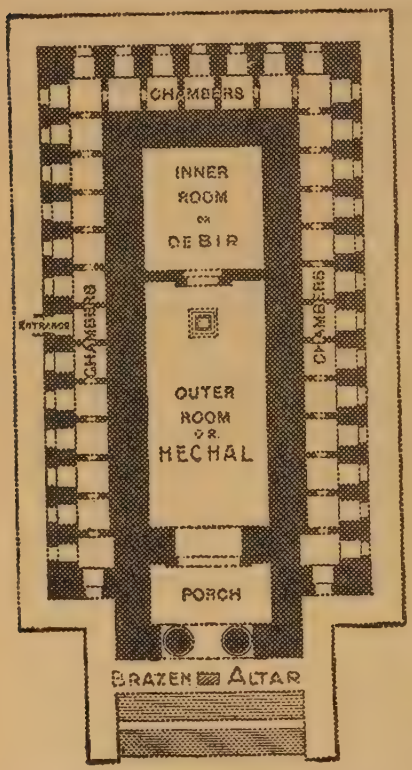
Near this cluster of palaces rose another structure

which came to be called the House of the Forest of Lebanon. The name had its origin in the impression created by the ground floor of this building where four long rows of cedar columns gave the aspect of a forest. The upper story which the columns supported was an arsenal where the King kept the shields and other arms of his guard.

But the most important of all the edifices which Solomon erected, the most magnificent of all of them, the one which eventually became the focus of the national faith, the leading symbol of its glory, and the lodestar of its hopes in time of adversity, was the Temple. It rose on the north of the buildings already described, its entrance being on the east facing the Mount of Olives. Two enormous bronze pillars in the Egyptian style, the capitals ornamented with designs of lotus and pomegranate, stood at the entrance of the porch which served as a vestibule for the Temple itself. These columns were done by a Tyrean artist named Hiram whose mother was of the tribe of Naphtali. Behind the porch and forming the main hall of the Temple proper was the *Hechal* or Holy Place. Here stood the Table of Showbread upon which twelve loaves, renewed every Sabbath, were laid. Here also was the Altar of Incense and ten golden seven-branched candlesticks which provided the light. The *Hechal* was open only to priests.

Behind the *Hechal* and of somewhat lower height came a smaller chamber called the *Debir* and later known as the Holy of Holies. The entrance to the *Debir* was by a door of olive wood, beautifully carved with figures of cherubim, palms and lotus inlaid with gold. Cedar beams ran across the ceiling, the floor was of cypress wood and the stone walls were hidden by cedar wain-

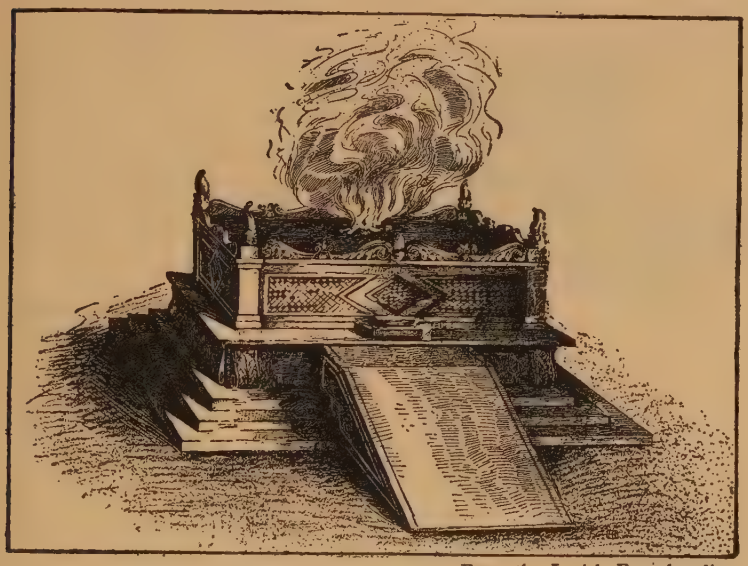
scoting gilded all over and also ornamented with carvings of cherubim, palms and lotus flowers. The *Debir* was the depositary of the holiest object of all, the Ark of the Covenant. Above the Ark stood two huge cherubim made of gilded wood. The inner wings of the cherubim touched each other while the outer ones reached to the walls of the chamber. The Holy of Holies was closed to all with the exception of the high priest, and even he could enter it on only one day of the year, the Day of Atonement.



GROUND PLAN OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE
According to the German scholar Bernhard Stade (1848–1906).

The chambers of the priests and those where the sacred treasures were kept rose all around to half the height of the Temple itself. A court surrounded the whole on three sides, north, east and south. Here the people met for worship and brought their sacrifices to the Brazen Altar which stood in the court in front of the entrance to the porch. Here also the King came and sat on an elevated dais while his sacrifices were being offered. Near the Brazen Altar stood a huge bronze basin supported by twelve bronze oxen and known as the "molten sea" which served as a reservoir for the

water required in the Temple service. From the "molten sea" the water was distributed by means of ten smaller basins borne on ten wonderfully wrought vehicles of bronze. All of this apparatus and the many other implements used by the priests and temple servants were the work of Hiram, the artist from Tyre.



From the Jewish Encyclopedia.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

As Restored according to Augustin Calmet (d. 1757)

This was the altar used for the sacrifice of animals. The projections at the corners are the "horns" (see p. 104; note 21).

From the laying of the foundations to its final equipment, it took seven years before the Temple was completed. From every corner of the Land of Israel the people flocked to Jerusalem for the ceremony of dedication. The Ark of the Covenant was first taken from the Tent where David had placed it, and reverently deposited in the Holy of Holies beneath the wings of the Cherubim. Innumerable sacrifices of sheep and oxen

were offered up, for sacrifice was the leading feature of the worship. And it is told how, when the priests came out of the *Debir,* "the glory of the Lord" in the form of a cloud filled the Temple.

The King delivered a dedication address to the dazzled multitude gazing in awe upon the superb edifice. The address was a sublime prayer on behalf of his people and of all people who should turn for help to the Temple. For, with a tolerance far in advance of his age, Solomon pleaded also for "the stranger that is not of Thy people Israel" who might come and pray in the Temple, "that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name."

From the Jewish Encyclopedia.

THE "MOLTEN SEA"

As restored according to Calmet

This was the principal laver, known also as the "Bronze Sea," used by the priests of Solomon's Temple.

"I have surely built Thee a house of habitation," exclaimed Solomon, "a place for Thee to dwell in forever." Nevertheless, he does not conceive God's dwelling place as being confined to any place. For he says:

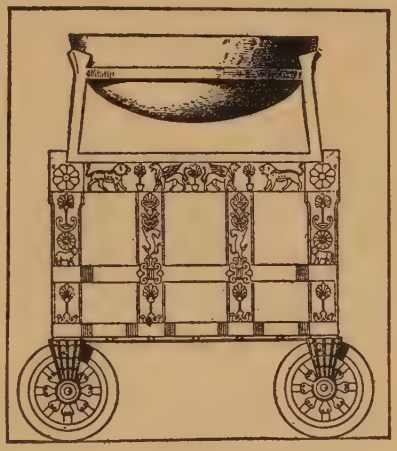
> "But will God in very truth dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!"

For fourteen days the feast of dedication continued. Then the people returned to their homes "joyful and glad at heart." For great was Israel now among the nations. Surely the son of David was a magnificent king, wise, splendid and redoubtable.

§ 4. *The Israelites, in the Meantime, Had Become a Nation of Small Farmers, though Shepherding Predominated in the South.*

WHILE the grand monarch Solomon lived in the pomp and magnificence of his capital, what was the manner of life that was led by his people from Dan to Beer-sheba? It is now about two-and-a-half centuries since Joshua led the children of Israel across the Jordan. Let us pause a moment in our story and see what sort of life they have set up in the Promised Land.

The children of Israel, we find, had now become almost wholly a nation of farmers. They had learned to till the soil, plowing it with wooden ox-drawn plows. In November, at the time of the "early rains," they planted their grain: wheat, corn and barley. In April and May, when the ears had been ripened by the "latter rains" and the sunlight, the reapers invaded the fields, cut the grain down with their flint or bronze sickles, and bound it into sheaves. After the reapers, came the gleaners, the poor and the strangers, who were permitted to pick up all the loose ears they could find. "I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves," said Ruth, the poor



A Portable Laver

Restored after Stade (d. 1906)

This was one of the ten basins fed from the "molten sea" and mounted on beautifully wrought bronze carriages.

stranger from Moab, to the foreman of the reapers in the field of Boaz. The sheaves were taken to the threshing floor where the grain was crushed out of the ears by heavy wooden blocks drawn round and round by oxen. Finally came the winnowing, when the precious seeds that are "the staff of life" were separated from the chaff.

But grain was not the only crop the farmers raised. They planted vineyards, especially in the hilly sections, hedging them around with fences of stones or thorns. The vines required careful tending and pruning. Grape-picking took place in July, August and September, and the crop was taken to the wine-press where the liquid that "rejoiceth the heart of man" was squeezed out.

FARMING IMPLEMENTS OF ANCIENT PALESTINE

The illustration shows the front and side views of a plowshare and a hoe.

Fruit trees also were cultivated, such as the fig, and especially the olive, which can grow on the rockiest soil. The fruit of the olive tree is good to eat, and, in addition, it yields a rich oil that has many uses from lighting to anointing kings.

The stories and prayers of the people reflect this life of the soil. Their songs and psalms abound with figures drawn from field and vineyard. Their proverbs and parables spring from the threshing-floor, the orchard and the wine-press.

But the occupation of cattle-raising continued to hold

THE THRESHING FLOOR OF A MODERN ARAB VILLAGE IN PALESTINE

The process of threshing grain is still the same as it was in Biblical days. The two men behind the teams are standing on threshing-drags made of planks and set on the under side with sharp pieces of stone. As the drag is driven over the sheaves, the ears are stripped and the stalks are cut up. The women with the sieves are sifting the grain to separate it from the straw.

a leading place in the nation's economy. This was particularly the case in the south where the craggy hills were not suitable for grain-raising. There the shepherd

continued to wander about with his sheep and goats. His life, like that of his nomad ancestors, was lonely and dangerous. He had always to be on the lookout for

ARAB SHEPHERDS WITH THEIR FLOCKS IN MODERN PALESTINE

The flocks consist of sheep and goats which are herded together, except when the land is too rough for the sheep. The good shepherd has a sort of "feel" for his flock, knowing each member of it, and being at once aware if any of them is missing. The folds, where the flocks are sheltered for the night, are rough enclosures made of stones with fringes of thorns on top.

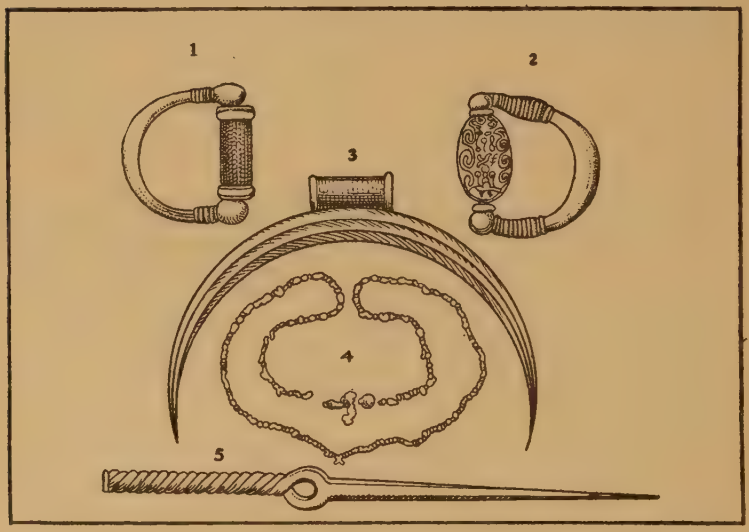
thieves and wild beasts. At night he folded his flocks behind an enclosure, and slept near the opening. His only recreation was playing the pipe or flute. It was when he was a shepherd in the hills of Judah that David became a skillful musician.

The shepherd idea entered deep into the thought of the people and into their songs and parables. The good shepherd is like a father to his flock. He brings back the straying sheep, he carries the sick lamb in his bosom. The good king is like a good shepherd to his people. God is the shepherd of His people Israel, guarding them against all evil. "The Lord is my shepherd," sings the psalmist, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters."

How did these farmers and shepherds build their houses, make their clothing, fashion their tools? There were, of course, no factories, and until they learned from their neighbors, the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Phoenicians, there were few Israelite craftsmen. Each family built its own house. They were very simple structures of stone or hardened clay, having but one story and one room. The donkey or camel was often housed with the family, in a corner where the floor was built lower, exactly as is still done by the Arab peasants in Palestine.

After the reign of Solomon, when many of the people lived in cities, artisans arose who devoted themselves to a single craft. They even formed guilds or trade unions, the potters being among the first to do so. But among the farmers, the home was the center of industry, and the housewife the artisan. She, "the woman of valor," made the cloth and the clothing, besides grinding the grain, baking the bread, and attending to the

numerous other needs of her household. "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands. She layeth her hands to the distaff and her hands hold the spindle. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet." In this way does the Book of Proverbs, the authorship of which is ascribed to Solomon, sing the praises of the good housewife, the "woman of valor."



ANCIENT JEWELRY FOUND IN PALESTINE

1, 2. Seals made of gold, silver and precious stones. 3. Crescent-shaped ornament used as a pendant to a necklace. 4. Necklace found at Gezer. 5. Silver pin found at Gezer.

The shepherds in the hills lived solitary lives, but the farmers lived in villages or small towns. In the evening, when the work on the fields was over, they gathered in the open space near the well or the gate and discussed the affairs of the farm, the village or the country. If a stranger happened to come, they flocked around him,

welcomed him, and asked for news. Here they listened with delight to songs and stories of "the brave days of old." Here the priests taught them the divine laws and statutes. Sometimes came a troop of prophets who sang and danced and inspired the people with profound religious emotion. The prophets were the apostles of the One God, exhorting the people to cast out the vestiges of idolatry which lingered among them from their contact with the other nations of the land.

In the broad gate of the village or town sat also the judges who were the elders of the people, listening to disputes and rendering decisions. These elders, or heads of families, represented their clans in all important matters. It was they, for example, who had come to Hebron and elected David king after coming to an agreement with him with regard to their rights and obligations. It was they whom King Solomon invited to join in the procession that bore the Ark to the Temple.

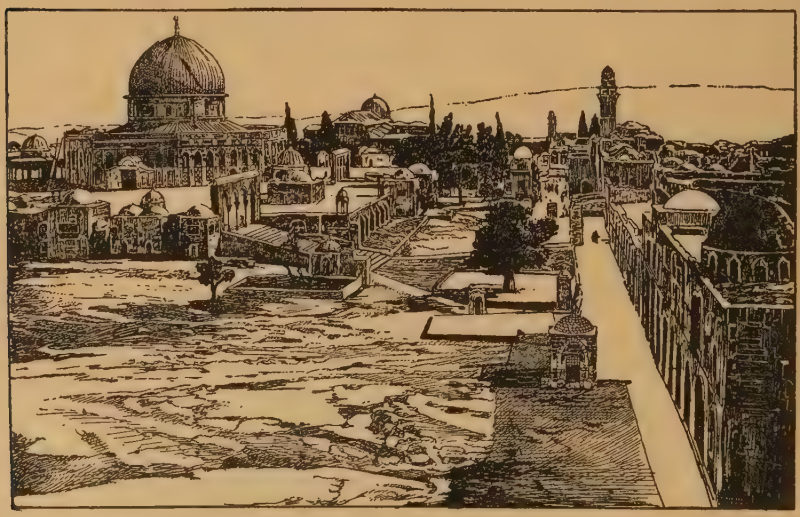
Until Solomon's days there were few among the people who were very rich and few who were very poor. There were few bound servants, or slaves. Men felt that they were all equal.

The round of the year brought into the lives of these simple peasants and shepherds days of rest and of special festivity and religious significance. There was first of all the Sabbath which refreshed the body and soul. Occasions such as a birth or marriage brought families together for special sacrifice. There was the Feast of the New Moon, also an occasion for family reunions, and the Feast of Sheep Shearing, dear to the heart of every shepherd, when he had a little compensation for the loneliness of his existence.

Finally, there were the three great harvest festivals

of the year: Passover in the early spring when the grain began to show in the ear; the Feast of Weeks when the grain was reaped; the Feast of Booths when the grapes were gathered and pressed. To these should be added the New Year and the Day of Atonement. The historic events which became connected with the three harvest feasts added meaning and zest to their observance. There was great rejoicing and merrymaking, with no lack of wine and meat, of dancing, singing and playing on instruments. They sang in praise and gratitude to God and sacrificed to Him the choicest of their fruits and flocks. It was He, they sang, Who rewarded the labor of their hands and He had commanded them to rejoice in their festivals.

Such, then, was the manner in which the children



THE TEMPLE AREA AS IT LOOKS TO-DAY

The domed building on the left is the Mosque of Omar, called also the Dome of the Rock (see illus., p. 31). In the background is the Mt. of Olives.

of Israel lived and labored and worshiped. And now the nation was ruled by a king who was admired and feared by his neighbors. The nation was strong and united. The throne of Solomon seemed firm as the mountain on which he had built his Temple to the God of Israel.

§ 5. *With All His Greatness, the People Harbor Many Grievances against Solomon, and a Certain Jeroboam Attempts a Rebellion.*

IT HAPPENED once in the reign of Solomon that the royal assurance of the grand monarch received a rude shock. There came messengers from Ephraim who reported that a certain Jeroboam son of Nebat had raised the standard of revolt. He was calling on the northern tribes to break away from the house of David. Disgruntled Ephraimites, glad to have found a leader, were flocking to his standard.

The rebel leader was no stranger to Solomon. Jeroboam had been one of the foremen in charge of the King's building operations. The King, impressed with the man's ability, had placed him over the labor contingents of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Solomon issued his orders immediately. The rebel must be captured and put to death. But Jeroboam managed to escape. He made his way into Egypt where a new dynasty, the Twenty-second, had risen to power. Shishak, or Sheshonk, was a new Pharaoh of Lybian origin who knew not Solomon, and would have been glad to see his strong northern neighbor broken. He welcomed Jeroboam, who stayed in Egypt but looked hungrily toward his own country, biding his time.

Jeroboam was certain that his time would come, for

his country, especially the north, was rife with discontent. Apparently Solomon's justice and wisdom were not without flaws. We are told that the prophet Ahijah, whose home was in Shiloh, had secretly encouraged the rebel. Meeting Jeroboam one day near Jerusalem, Ahijah, in the startling and symbolic manner in which the prophets liked to convey their meaning, had stripped off his garment, cut it into twelve pieces and given ten of them to Jeroboam. "Take these ten pieces," Ahijah had said, "For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee."

Ahijah and others, who were zealous for the God of Israel, were dissatisfied with the King. They may have been willing that the King should put up his dazzling edifices, although his parade of pomp and power clashed painfully with their own austerely simple mode of life. But they were indignant that Solomon should permit altars and shrines to be built to foreign idols. Such shrines were built for Astarte, the lewd goddess of the Phoenicians; for Milcom, the idol of Ammon; for Isis, the cow-goddess of Egypt; for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab. In those shrines, Solomon's foreign wives, as well as the Phoenician artisans and other foreigners who lived in Jerusalem, came and practiced their strange rites. The Israelites, the prophets complained, were being lured away from the worship of their own God by the idols in their midst. The King, they charged, was false to the God of Israel.

There were other and even more galling causes of discontent. We have seen how the King, taking the Egyptian Pharaohs for his models, had enslaved the Canaanites and forced his Israelite subjects also to labor

in the forests of Lebanon. The name of Adoniram, the master of the labor levy, became a hated name among them. We have also seen how the people were compelled to provide for the needs of the King's large and expensive household. There were so many receptions, sacrifices and entertainments! Samuel's warnings against a king had come only too true. The court danced and the people paid the piper.

Nor was that all, for there were still other taxes and complaints. Solomon's friend and ally, Hiram, king of Tyre, did not provide him with materials and craftsmen for his building operations out of sheer goodness of heart. Hiram got well paid for it. Every year he got from Solomon large quantities of corn, wine and oil, which, of course, were obtained from the people. Solomon even ceded to Hiram twenty cities that lay in the territory of Asher bordering on Phoenicia. Hiram, it seems, was not very much pleased with those cities, but their surrender was certainly resented by the Israelites.

The northern tribes, among whom Ephraim was still in the lead, were convinced that the King played favorites with Judah. The fact that Judah was exempted from the levy for the King's household confirmed their belief. Besides, the north, with its many more cities, its more fertile soil and its generally greater wealth, was bound to contribute a bigger share of the taxes. The north was being taxed and the south spared, said the men of Ephraim.

How to remove the jealousy and bitterness between north and south — that was the great problem. The future of the nation depended on finding a solution for it. Perhaps the wise Solomon should have given more time to this problem and less to his receptions and palaces and

wives. But little did Solomon see of his people or his people of him. Like the Pharaoh of Egypt whom he sought to imitate, he thought it accorded best with his royal dignity to live above and apart from his people. His father had mingled with them freely. His father had danced with them before the Ark of the Covenant. Solomon, after the grand manner of Oriental despots, only showed himself before them on great occasions.

But as long as the illustrious monarch sat on the throne no one except Jeroboam dared lift up his hand in rebellion. Men were dazzled by his power and splendor. They were flattered by his fame and glory. He received numerous gifts from foreign rulers and once a famous queen, lured by the glowing reports of his wisdom and magnificence, came to visit him. She was the queen of Sheba, a land in Arabia near the Red Sea. "And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices and gold very much, and precious stones." She propounded all sorts of riddles and questions to Solomon, but there was naught that was hidden from the wise king. For Solomon had himself composed a great many proverbs, parables and songs. And when the queen saw all the greatness and wealth of Solomon, "there was no more spirit in her." "The half was not told me," she said.

But now the monarch was growing old. And, as often happens with a life of ease and luxury, old age brought sadness and disillusionment. Now Solomon was the weary philosopher, known by the name of Koheleth in the Book of Ecclesiastes, who cries: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" He became less energetic and more attached to his court and his foreign wives. Now

and then he even accompanied them to worship in their shrines.

At length, after a reign of forty years, the King, in the year 933 B.C.E., "went the way of all the earth and slept with his fathers," and his son Rehoboam ascended the lion-guarded steps to sit on his gold-and-ivory throne. Solomon had been a great king, with all his shortcomings. And, as in the case of his father, later generations passed over his faults and remembered only his wisdom and magnificence.

In Egypt, Jeroboam heard the news of Solomon's death. Instantly he prepared for the return journey. The hour for which he waited had struck.

TOPIC EIGHT: LITERATURE

1. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN SOLOMON AND ADONIJAH

(1 Kings* 1[5-53])

THIS narrative gives a vivid picture of the intrigues and passions that usually disturb an Oriental court on the question of the succession. The story is told by a master dramatist in the style of a swift scenario. The action throughout is pitched in the heroic key. The characters enter and leave

* The Book of Kings is the fourth book in the second main division of the Hebrew Scriptures called *Nebiim* or Prophets. It will be recalled (see vol. 1, p. 212, note) that this division is further subdivided into *Nebiim Rishonim,* "First (or Former) Prophets, and *Nebiim Achronim,* "Latter Prophets." The Book of Kings is the last book of *Nebiim Rishonim.*

Like the Book of Samuel, that of Kings is divided into two parts, referred to respectively as 1 Kings and 2 Kings (First and Second Kings). Together, the two parts contain the history of the Hebrew nation from the declining years of David up to the Babylonian Captivity.

The first part of the Book, or 1 Kings, has twenty-two chapters. The first two deal with Solomon's victory in his struggle with Adonijah and the various steps he took to secure his throne against possible rivals. Chapters 3 to 11 deal with the reign of Solomon, with a full account of his government and fiscal system, and the building and dedication of the Temple. Chapter 12 recounts the revolt and secession of the north and the establishment of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam. The rest of 1 Kings is devoted to the history of both kingdoms until the reign of Ahaziah son of Ahab in Israel, and that of Jehoshaphat in Judah. The deeds of the prophet Elijah figure prominently in the last six chapters of 1 Kings.

Besides the selections given, the following portions of 1 Kings are recommended for reading:

a. Solomon's Greatness and Wisdom (Chap. 5[1-14]).
b. Solomon's Alliance with Hiram of Tyre (Chap. 5[15-32]).
c. The Wars between Ahab and Ben-hadad (Chap. 20).
d. Ahab's Last Campaign against Aram (Chap. 22[1-39]).

the stage in the grand manner, there is plot and counterplot, and the drama moves on to a magnificent climax in the coronation of Solomon.

NOW Adonijah the son of Haggith[1] exalted himself, saying: "I will be king"; and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.[2] And his father had not grieved him all his life in saying: "Why hast thou done so?"[3] and he was also a very goodly man;[4] and he was born after Absalom.[5]

And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest,[6] and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada,[7] and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men that belonged to David,[8] were not with Adonijah.

And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fatlings by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel;[9] and he called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants; but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.[10]

Then Nathan spoke unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying: "Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save

[1] After Absalom's death Adonijah was the oldest of David's surviving sons.

[2] *i.e.*, to clear the way before his passage and act as a bodyguard. It should be noted that Absalom before him had resorted to the same methods of impressing the populace.

[3] *i.e.*, David had let him do as he pleased.

[4] *i.e.*, a handsome man.

[5] He had the right, therefore, to consider himself entitled to the succession.

[6] Zadok, apparently, was Abiathar's rival.

[7] He was the captain of the palace guard.

[8] The *gibborim* or heroes (see p. 19).

[9] See map p. 70.

[10] Apparently Adonijah intended to make this feast and sacrifice the occasion for proclaiming himself king, thus presenting David with what is called in diplomacy a *fait accompli* ("accomplished deed").

thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.[11] Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him: Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thy handmaid, saying: Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words."

And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber. And Bath-sheba bowed, and prostrated herself unto the king. And the king said: "What wouldest thou?" And she said unto him: "My lord, thou didst swear by the LORD thy God unto thy handmaid: Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and thou, my lord the king, knowest it not. And he hath slain oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host; but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. And thou, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders." [11]

And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. And they told the king, saying: "Behold Nathan the prophet." [12] And when he was come in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said: "My lord, O king, hast thou said: Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host,[13] and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say: Long live king Adonijah. But me, even me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son

[11] It was the ordinary thing for a successful pretender to do away with his rival and his rival's supporters.

[12] Bath-sheba, thereupon, exits, as Eastern custom requires.

[13] The "captains of the host" are, of course, Joab and his subordinate officers.

of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not declared unto thy servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

Then king David answered and said: "Call me Bath-sheba." And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king swore and said: "As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, verily as I swore unto thee by the LORD, the God of Israel, saying: Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day." Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and prostrated herself to the king, and said: "Let my lord king David live for ever."

And king David said: "Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came before the king. And the king said unto them: "Take with you the servants of your lord,[14] and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule,[15] and bring him down to Gihon.[16] And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; and blow ye with the horn, and say: Long live king Solomon. Then ye shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead; and I have appointed him to be prince over Israel and over Judah."

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said: "Amen; so say the LORD, the God of my lord the king. As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be He with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites,[17] went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil

[14] *i.e.*, the Cherethites and Pelethites, or palace guard (see p. 40 note 11).

[15] The common people rode on asses, members of the royal family rode on mules.

[16] See map p. 70.

[17] See p. 40, note 11.

out of the Tent,[18] and anointed Solomon. And they blew the ram's horn; and all the people said: "Long live king Solomon." And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

And Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said: "Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?" While he yet spoke, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar[19] the priest came; and Adonijah said: "Come in; for thou art a worthy man, and bringest good tidings."

And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah: "Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule. And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon; and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying: God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne; and the king bowed down upon the bed.[20] And also thus said the king: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it."

And all the guests of Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way. And Adonijah feared because of Solomon; and he arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.[21] And it was told Solomon, saying: "Behold, Adonijah

[18] Probably the tent or Tabernacle where the Ark of the Covenant reposed.

[19] This was the same Jonathan who had acted as spy for David during the rebellion of Absalom (see p. 27).

[20] David was now old and bed-ridden. He bowed down in worship.

[21] The altar, according to law and custom, gave a man asylum from the pursuit and vengeance of his enemies. Premeditated murder was the only crime against which the altar was no protection. ("And if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take

feareth king Solomon; for, lo, he hath laid hold on the horns of the altar, saying: Let king Solomon swear unto me first of all that he will not slay his servant with the sword." And Solomon said: "If he shall show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth;[22] but if wickedness be found in him, he shall die." So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and prostrated himself before king Solomon; and Solomon said unto him: "Go to thy house."

2. SOLOMON'S DREAM

(1 Kings 3 4-15)

IN THE imagination of later Jewish generations, Solomon the wise man takes precedence even over Solomon the splendid ruler. Tradition and legend united to extol his "wise and understanding heart." It became natural, therefore, to regard Solomon as the author of much of the wisdom literature (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, etc.) which the race produced. The following charming story emphasizes the divine origin of his marvelous wisdom.

AND the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place;[23] a thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said: "Ask what I shall give thee." And Solomon said: "Thou hast shown unto Thy servant David my father great kindness, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee; and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

him from Mine altar, that he may die."—*Exodus* 21 14). The horns of the altar were projections at each of the four corners, believed to possess special sanctity, to which the fugitive clung.

[22] Solomon's clemency, in view of the prevailing practice (see note 11 above), is quite extraordinary.

[23] *i.e.*, it was the chief shrine in the vicinity. The Temple had not yet been built. The prophets of later generations frowned upon the local "high places."

"And now, O LORD my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child;[24] I know not how to go out or come in.[25] And thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give Thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge[26] this Thy great people?"

And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him: "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour — so that there hath not been any among the kings like unto thee — all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream; and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

[24] *i.e.*, I am weak and inexperienced.
[25] *i.e.*, I know not how to perform my duties.
[26] *i.e.*, to govern (see vol. 1, p. 231).

3. THE WISDOM OF THE YOUNG KING

(1 KINGS 3 16-28)

THIS is the famous story of the two mothers and the child and it illustrates Solomon's deep insight into human nature and human motives. A story like this, with its blend of riddle and melodrama, was sure to exercise a peculiar fascination on the popular mind, especially the Eastern mind.

THEN came there two women unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said: "Oh, my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also; and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.[27] And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlay it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thy handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead; but when I had looked well at it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, whom I did bear."

And the other woman said: "Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son." And this said: "No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son." Thus they spoke before the king.

Then said the king: "The one saith: This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead; and the other saith: Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living." And the king said: "Fetch me a sword." And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said: "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other." Then spoke the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her heart yearned upon her son, and she said: "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it." But the other said: "It shall be neither mine nor thine; divide it." Then the king answered and said: "Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof."

[27] *i.e.*, there were no witnesses to the events that followed.

And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do justice.

4. THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

(1 Kings 8)

AN IMPRESSION of grandeur, of spiritual grandeur especially, disengages itself from the narrative that follows. The splendors of the Temple, the magnitude of the celebrating throngs, the multitude of the sacrifices are overshadowed by the exalted spirit and sentiments which the King expresses in his dedicatory address and prayer. The event, in all its incidents, is on the epic level. But, in line with the peculiar genius of the Jewish people, the epic is in terms of spiritual experience.

THE PEOPLE ASSEMBLE

THEN Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses[28] of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.[29] And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast, in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.[30]

[28] *i.e.*, the heads of families.

[29] See map p. 70. It should be recalled that the Ark of the Covenant had been deposited by David in a tent or Tabernacle.

[30] The "feast" is the Feast of Tabernacles or Succoth (see vol. 1, p. 136) and Ethanim is an older name for the month, now called Tishri, which is the seventh month of the agricultural year but the first month of the religious year. The Jews now count Tishri, on the first two days of which falls Rosh Hashanah, as the first of the year. The complete list of months is as follows:

1. Tishri (Sept.—Oct.)
2. Heshvan (Oct.—Nov.)
3. Kislev (Nov.—Dec.)
4. Tebeth (Dec.—Jan.)
5. Shebat (Jan.—Feb.)
6. Adar (Feb.—March)
7. Nissan (March—April)
8. Iyar [pron.: *Ee-yar*] (April—May)
9. Sivan (May—June)
10. Tammuz (June—July)
11. Ab (July—Aug.)
12. Elul (Aug.—Sept.)

THE ARK IS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE

And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent; even these did the priests and the Levites bring up. And king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto its place, into the Sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place,[31] even under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves were seen from the holy place, even before the Sanctuary;[32] but they could not be seen without; and there they are unto this day. There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.[33]

And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

SOLOMON'S ADDRESS

Then spoke Solomon:

"The LORD hath said that He would dwell in the thick darkness.[34]
I have surely built Thee a house of habitation,
A place for Thee to dwell in for ever."

And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel; and all the congregation of Israel stood. And he said: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with

[31] *i.e.*, to the *Debir* (see p. 83).

[32] *i.e.*, from the *Hechal* (see p. 83).

[33] *i.e.*, when the children of Israel received the Ten Commandments.

[34] Solomon's meaning is that God, although He is the creator of light, prefers to shroud himself in mystery.

His mouth unto David my father, and hath with His hand fulfilled it, saying: Since the day that I brought forth My people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that My name might be there; but I chose David to be over My people Israel.

"Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. But the LORD said unto David my father: Whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for My name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart; nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for My name.

"And the LORD hath established His word that He spoke; for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. And there have I set a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

SOLOMON'S PRAYER

And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven; and he said: "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants, that walk before Thee with all their heart; who hast kept with Thy servant David my father that which Thou didst promise him; yea, Thou spokest with Thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with Thy hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that which Thou hast promised him, saying: There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel,[35] if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk before Me as thou hast walked before Me. Now therefore, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be verified, which Thou didst speak unto Thy servant David my father.

"But will God in very truth dwell on the earth? behold, heaven

[35] *i.e.*, the throne shall always be occupied by one of your descendants.

and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded![36] Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee this day; that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place whereof Thou hast said: My name shall be there; to hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant shall pray toward this place. And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place; yea, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive.

"If a man sin against his neighbor, and an oath be exacted of him to cause him to swear, and he come and swear before Thine altar in this house;[37] then hear Thou in heaven, and do, and judge Thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his own head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

"When Thy people Israel are smitten down before the enemy, when they do sin against Thee, if they turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray and make supplication unto Thee in this house; then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them back unto the land which Thou gavest unto their fathers.

"When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, when they do sin against Thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin, when Thou dost afflict them; then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy servants, and of Thy people Israel, when Thou teachest them the good way wherein they should walk; and send rain upon Thy land, which Thou hast given to Thy people for an inheritance.

"If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locust or caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man of all Thy people Israel, who shall know every man

[36] Note the majestic conception of the Deity here expressed.

[37] *i.e.*, if he has sinned against his neighbor and swears in the Temple that he has not.

the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house; then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart Thou knowest — for Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men — that they may fear Thee all the days that they live in the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers.

"Moreover concerning the stranger that is not of Thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country for Thy name's sake — for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy mighty hand, and of Thine outstretched arm — when he shall come and pray toward this house; hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for; that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as doth Thy people Israel, and that they may know that Thy name is called upon this house which I have built.

"If Thy people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatsoever way Thou shalt send them, and they pray unto the LORD toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Thy name; then hear Thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

"If they sin against Thee — for there is no man that sinneth not — and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive unto the land of the enemy, far off or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn back, and make supplication unto Thee in the land of them that carried them captive, saying: We have sinned, and have done iniquitously, we have dealt wickedly; if they return unto Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who carried them captive, and pray unto Thee toward their land,[38] which Thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name; then hear Thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause; and forgive Thy people who have sinned against Thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have trans-

[38] When praying, Jews still turn toward Jerusalem.

gressed against Thee; and give them compassion before those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them; for they are Thy people, and Thine inheritance, which Thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron;[39] that Thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of Thy servant, and unto the supplication of Thy people Israel, to hearken unto them whensoever they cry unto Thee. For Thou didst set them apart from among all the peoples of the earth, to be Thine inheritance, as Thou didst speak by the hand of Moses Thy servant, when Thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."

SOLOMON'S BENEDICTION

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying: "Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto His people Israel,[40] according to all that He promised; there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant.

"The LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us; that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that He maintain the cause of His servant, and the cause of His people Israel, as every day shall require; that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD, He is God; there is none else. Let your heart therefore be whole with the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes, and to keep His commandments, as at this day."

[39] *i.e.*, the furnace where iron is smelted. The memory of the sufferings in Egypt was always fresh.

[40] *i.e.*, hath given them victory and peace.

THE SACRIFICE AND FEAST

And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which He offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt-offering, and the meal-offering, and the fat of the peace-offerings; because the brazen altar that was before the LORD was too little to receive the burnt-offering, and the meal-offering, and the fat of the peace-offerings.[41]

So Solomon held the feast[42] at that time, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entrance of Hamath unto the Brook of Egypt,[43] before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. On the eighth day[44] he sent the people away, and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shown unto David His servant, and to Israel His people.

[41] The rest of the peace offering, which was the largest of all, was eaten in the sacrificial feast.

[42] See note 30, p. 108.

[43] Hamath is in the far north, the Brook of Egypt (the *Wadi el-Arish*) about 50 miles below Gaza in the south. The meaning, of course, is that the people were assembled from all the limits of the land.

[44] The inconsistency is explained by assuming that the first seven days were devoted to the dedication ceremonies and the other seven days to the observance of the Succoth festival.

5. SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

(1 KINGS 10[1-3])

THIS is another of those stories to delight the heart of an Eastern people. The two monarchs vie with each other not only in generosity and splendor but in wit and wisdom. The story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba has been embellished with numerous legends and has served as the basis for a great deal of music, drama and literature.

AND when the queen of Sheba[45] heard of the fame of Solomon because of the name of the LORD,[46] she came to prove him with hard questions.[47]

And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices and gold very much, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she spoke with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions; there was not any thing hid from the king which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, and the food of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers,[48] and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his burnt-offering which he offered in the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.[49]

And she said to the king: "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me; thou hast wisdom and prosperity exceeding the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, that stand continually before

[45] Sheba was located in the south-west of Arabia and was the seat of a thriving commercial civilization.

[46] The meaning is believed to be: "because of *the Temple he built to the* name of the Lord."

[47] *i.e.*, with riddles (see vol. 1, p. 249). Propounding and answering riddles was a rather serious and fascinating occupation.

[48] *i.e.*, the number of courtiers and officials who sat down to eat with him and the number of those who waited at the banquet.

[49] *i.e.*, she was lost in astonishment.

thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made He thee king, to do justice and righteousness."

And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold,[50] and of spices very great store, and precious stones; there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of sandal-wood and precious stones. And the king made of the sandal-wood pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for the singers; there came no such sandal-wood, nor was seen, unto this day.

And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned, and went to her own land, she and her servants.

[50] It has been estimated that the gold Talent weighed 3,000 shekels and was the equivalent, in weight, of about 30,000 gold dollars. The Queen's gift would amount therefore to about 3,000,000 gold dollars, having a much greater purchasing power than this sum has to-day.

6. SOLOMON AND JEROBOAM

(1 KINGS 11[26-43])

THIS account of Jeroboam's first appearance on the scene is preceded by an enumeration of Solomon's lapses, in the matter of idol-worship, that sprang from his ready indulgence to his foreign wives. Thus is explained the break-up of the kingdom which occurs after Solomon's death, and the epochal event is prepared for.

AND Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah,[51] a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, he also[52] lifted up his hand against the king. And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo,[53] and repaired the breach of the city of David his father. And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour;[54] and Solomon saw the young man that he was industrious, and he gave him charge over all the labour of the house of Joseph.[55]

And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite[56] found him in the way; now Ahijah had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field. And Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces.[57] And he said to Jeroboam: "Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee — but he

[51] The location of this place is unknown.

[52] Previously, mention had been made of Hadad the Edomite and Rezon of Damascus who fought against Solomon (see p. 75).

[53] Millo was apparently a fortification between the Temple mount and the city of David or Zion.

[54] *i.e.*, a man of great ability.

[55] *i.e.*, the forced labor contingents of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh ("the house of Joseph").

[56] Of the town of Shiloh which, apparently, had again become inhabited (see vol. 1, p. 253).

[57] Twelve pieces to stand, of course, for the twelve tribes of Israel. It was one of the marked traits of the prophets to dramatize their ideas.

shall have one tribe,[58] for My servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel — because that they have forsaken Me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth[59] the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom[60] the god of the children of Ammon; and they have not walked in My ways, to do that which is right in Mine eyes, and to keep My statutes and Mine ordinances, as did David his father. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David My servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept My commandments and My statutes; but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David My servant may have a lamp alway before Me in Jerusalem,[61] the city which I have chosen Me to put My name there. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign over all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in My ways, and do that which is right in Mine eyes, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as David My servant did, that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever."

Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt,[62] and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?[63] And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over

[58] See p. 126.

[59] *Ashtoreth* is another name for *Astarte* (among the Babylonians and Assyrians: *Ishtar*), the goddess of fertility and love, the most popular of the female deities.

[60] Chemosh and Milcom were the national gods of the Moabites and Ammonites respectively.

[61] The lamp which was always kept burning in a tent or house stood for the continued life of the household.

[62] Shishak (in the Egyptian records, Shoshenk) was the founder of the Twenty-second Dynasty, about 950 B.C.E.

[63] A book which, of course, is lost.

all Israel was forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father; and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

ONE OF THE POOLS OF SOLOMON, BETWEEN BETH-LEHEM AND HEBRON

The so-called Pools of Solomon are three huge stone cisterns which, in the period of the First Commonwealth, were used as reservoirs whence water was brought to Jerusalem by means of two aqueducts. The pools are again in use, the lower aqueduct having been discovered and pipes laid in it to the capital. These pools have been ascribed to Solomon on the basis of the following passage (Eccles. 2 [6]): "I made me pools of water, to water therefrom the wood springing up with trees."

TOPIC NINE

The Checkered Career of Israel

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The Checkered Career of Israel

§ 1. *The North, upon the Death of Solomon, Secedes and Chooses Jeroboam for Its King.*

§ 2. *After a Number of Bloody Dynastic Changes, Comes the Dynasty of Omri, the Most Important of All That Reigned over Israel.*

§ 3. *The Arameans and Phoenicians Are the Foreign Nations with Whom Israel Is Most Closely in Contact.*

§ 4. *In the Reign of Ahab, Son of Omri, the Prophet Elijah Labors to Clear Israel of Phoenician Idolatry.*

§ 5. *The Dynasty Founded by Omri Is Brought to a Bloody End by Jehu, the Commander of the Israelite Army.*

§ 6. *Israel is Brought to a Low Pass under Jehu, but Is Restored under His Grandson Jehoash.*

TOPIC NINE: LITERATURE

1. The Revolt of the North (1 *Kings* 12^{1-24}).
2. Elijah Victorious (1 *Kings* 18).
3. The Still Small Voice (1 *Kings* 19^{1-14}).
4. The Story of Naboth's Vineyard (1 *Kings* 21).
5. The Campaign against Moab (2 *Kings* 3).
6. Jehu the Avenger (2 *Kings* $9^{14-28; 30-37}$).
7. A Proud King Humbled (2 *Kings* 14^{1-22}).

TOPIC NINE

The Checkered Career of Israel

§ 1. *The North, upon the Death of Solomon, Secedes and Chooses Jeroboam for Its King.*

SHORTLY after the death of Solomon, a gathering which had momentous results on the fate of Israel took place in the ancient city of Shechem, the metropolis of Ephraim and principal center of the northern tribes. The city was swarming with people who had come from all over the north to exercise their ancient right of electing the king. And Rehoboam, the son and heir of Solomon, had come to Shechem to be acclaimed king of Israel.

He came, although he regarded the election as an empty form; for Judah, loyal to the house of David, had already recognized him, as a matter of course. Rehoboam, brought up in the lazy luxury of his father's court, was vain and arrogant. He knew, no doubt, that the people were discontented. He felt it necessary, therefore, to impress them and overawe them. So he came surrounded with all the pomp of a brilliant retinue. He had with him a whole troop of ministers and counsellors, old counsellors who had served his father, and young ones, companions of his own idle life, who felt that now their turn for place and power had arrived.

But the men who were gathered in Shechem were determined that the election should be no empty form.

And they had a leader. Jeroboam, son of Nebat, was again with them.

"Thy father made our yoke grievous," said the elders of the people to Rehoboam, "Make thou his heavy yoke, which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." In three days, said the King, they should have his answer.

He sought the advice of the old counsellors, and they urged him to make his answer mild and courteous. Then came the young counsellors and they gave him the exact words for his reply.

The third day arrived and again the people stood before him.

"My little finger," spoke Rehoboam, "is thicker than my father's loins. My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." *

But the people were not cowed as Rehoboam expected they would be. Again the traditional cries of revolt sounded through Israel: "What portion have we in David? To your tents, O Israel! Now see to thine own house, David!"

Rehoboam followed his first mistake with another. He sent Adoniram to the people, the man who had been in charge of the forced labor. The people stoned him to death. Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem. The northern tribes then called Jeroboam, and elected him their king. Thus was Israel divided into two kingdoms, never more to be united.

When he returned to Jerusalem, Rehoboam assembled his loyal forces to win back the north. But one of those strange men, a prophet of the Lord, before whom

* Scorpions were whips studded with spikes.

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

both kings and people trembled, came to Rehoboam and his warriors, and said: "Ye shall not go up nor fight against your brethren, the children of Israel. Return every man to his house!" The people obeyed. The thing was from the Lord, said the prophet.

Of the twelve tribes, only Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to the house of David. Since Judah was the more important of the two, the southern kingdom is ordinarily referred to simply as Judah. With Judah, however, should be counted the tribe of Simeon, which, by this time, had become completely merged with it. Thus, nine of the original tribes had broken away. The two parts of Manasseh, however, the one living east, the other west of the Jordan, had come to be regarded as separate tribes. The kingdom of the north, therefore, is spoken of as the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. More often it is simply called Israel and sometimes, also, Ephraim, since the tribe of Ephraim was the most important of the ten. Just south of Ramah and Beth-el ran the boundary between the two.

Judah and Israel were far from equal in size and strength. The territory of Israel was about three times as large as that of Judah and much more fertile. The greater part of Judah consisted of desert and rocky hills, where, at best, only flocks of sheep and goats could find sustenance. Israel had rich plains and verdant slopes and valleys. Its population was perhaps twice as numerous as that of the south. The north, moreover, was much further advanced in civilization. It had more cities, and carried on a more extensive trade with other nations.

In one important respect, however, Judah had the advantage. It was less exposed to attacks from powerful

neighbors. Egypt was the only one of Judah's neighbors who represented a serious menace. But the desert lay between Judah and Egypt, lessening the danger considerably. The Philistines on the west were in a state of decline. The Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites were more or less subjugated. Israel, on the other hand, had a powerful neighbor, the Arameans, on the north. And further north a still more dangerous power, Assyria, was stretching out its greedy and bloody claws to the south.

§ 2. *After a Number of Bloody Dynastic Changes, Comes the Dynasty of Omri, the Most Important of All That Reigned over Israel.*

WITH the division of the nation into two kingdoms, the thread of our story breaks into two strands, each running its own course. Occasionally, the strands meet. At times, Israel and Judah clash in warfare; at times, they unite for a common enterprise. But each kingdom pursues its separate career; and, first, we follow to its end the career of Israel.

Jeroboam, who reigned over Israel for twenty-two years, had but little rest in all that time. The peaceful days of Solomon were over. True, the former enemies, like the Philistines, the Moabites and Ammonites, were no longer as formidable as they had been. But new enemies arose, and, what is worse, Israel and Judah themselves were unable to live at peace with each other.

There was continuous war between the two kingdoms during the reign of Jeroboam. Apparently, Rehoboam could not reconcile himself to the loss of the better part of his kingdom, in spite of the prophet's declaration that "it was from the Lord." Jeroboam fortified Shechem against the king of Judah, building a

special citadel in it for himself. Nevertheless, he was compelled at one time to remove his residence to the city of Penuel across the Jordan.

Jeroboam might have lost his kingdom, if the king of Judah had not been compelled to face a more formi-

Modern Nablus Where Stood Ancient Shechem

Nablus is a corruption of *Neapolis,* the name given the city by the Romans in the time of Titus. It is situated between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. It has a population of about 25,000, nearly all of whom are Moslems. Shechem was the metropolis of the north and the scene of important historic events, until Omri made Samaria his capital.

dable enemy. Shishak, the Egyptian Pharaoh who had given Jeroboam asylum from the wrath of Solomon, now came to the rescue of the king of Israel. He did not, of course, act out of love for Jeroboam; he was interested in preventing a reunion of the two kingdoms.

Shishak, it appears, did not stop with the invasion of Judah but went on, entering also many of the cities of the north. The Pharaoh simply followed in the footsteps of so many of his predecessors who believed it es-

sential to their glory to leave behind the record of an invasion of Canaan and Syria. Among the captured places listed by Shishak on a tablet in his palace at Karnak, are found the names of the cities of Megiddo and Taanach.

Besides the military menace of Judah, Jeroboam was faced with another serious problem. It arose from the habit many of his people had acquired of going to Jerusalem for worship and sacrifice. The Temple already exercised a great attraction even upon the northerners, an attraction which Jeroboam naturally looked upon with misgivings. He proceeded to counteract it by establishing central shrines in his own kingdom, utilizing the places which had served as religious centers in former days: Beth-el near the border between the two kingdoms, and Dan in the far north.

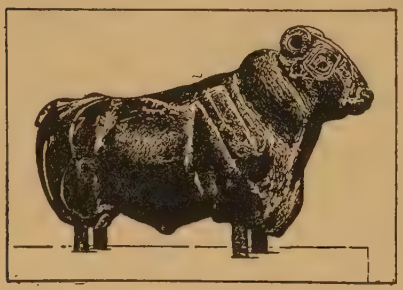
SHISHAK'S MONUMENT TO HIS VICTORIES

This stela, which the Pharaoh caused to be engraved on a wall in the temple of Karnak, shows the god Amon-Re (see illustrations, vol. 1, p. 92 and p. 100) handing the monarch the sickle-sword and bringing him the conquered cities, symbolized by chains of bound captives.

In those places, Jeroboam set up an idolatrous form of worship. The golden calf, around which the Israelites had danced in the desert on their journey from Egypt, reappeared on the altars of Beth-el and Dan. "Ye have gone up long enough to Jerusalem," said the King to his

people. The "high places" flourished, and the land was filled with idol worship. Moreover, in choosing priests for his shrines, Jeroboam disregarded the time-honored rights of the tribe of Levi.

Jeroboam's religious offenses drove some of his subjects, including many Levites, to migrate to Judah. Moreover, he lost the favor of the prophets who had previously supported him. Ahijah of Shiloh now foretold the downfall of his house. A prophet from Judah came to Beth-el, and denounced the King in front of his altar. The prophets had looked with favor upon the secession of Israel because they had been antagonized by Solomon's worldly pomp, and outraged by the idol-worship which he tolerated. But they found, to their chagrin, that the king of Israel exceeded the grand monarch in religious misconduct.



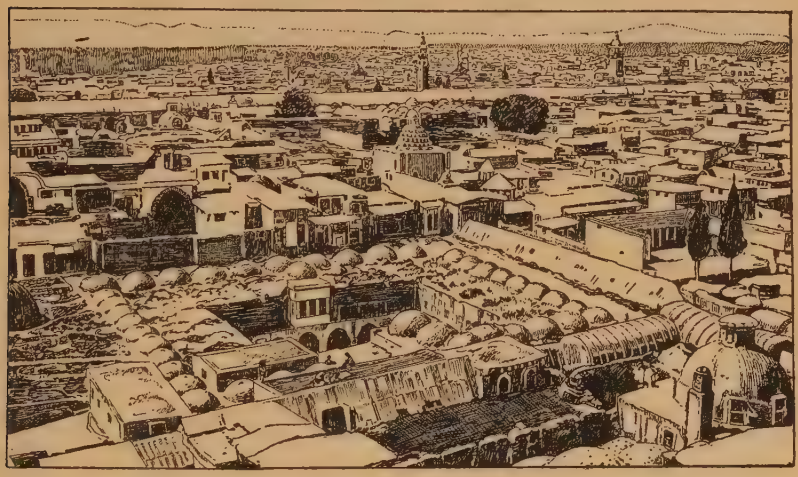
A Sacred Bull

This stone figure was found on the site of Larsa, one of the important cities of ancient Babylonia. Larsa was a center of the worship of the sun-god, Shamash.

The death of Jeroboam was followed quickly by the fulfillment of the doom which the prophets had pronounced on his house. After reigning only two years, his son, Nadab, while besieging the Philistine fortress Gibbethon, was set upon and murdered by Baasa, his general. Baasa then wiped out the entire family of Jeroboam and seized the throne. It was the first of the bloody dynastic changes with which the history of Israel is spotted. It was to be followed by others, in contrast to Judah, where the descendants of David succeeded one

another without a break. The idea of legitimacy, which recognizes as the rightful ruler only him who is of the same blood as the previous monarch, could not take root in Israel as it did in Judah.

War continued between the usurper and Asa, a grandson of Rehoboam, who now ruled over Judah. Baasa made an alliance with Ben-hadad, king of Aram,



DAMASCUS, THE "HEAD OF ARAM"

This, of course, is a view of the modern city, which, as in ancient days, is the principal city of Syria, with a population of about 200,000. It is situated in a well-watered plain at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon, 2,250 feet above sea-level. The city is famous for the beauty of its gardens. Legend makes it the oldest city in the world. Its mention in the Bible begins with the first Patriarch.

whose capital was Damascus. He then seized the strategic town of Ramah, north of Jerusalem, near the frontier between the two kingdoms, and fortified it. Asa, whose capital was menaced, emptied his palace and Temple of a good part of their newly acquired treasures, and bribed the Aramean king to attack his ally. Ben-hadad, whose friendship was for sale, invaded the ter-

ritory of Israel, and Baasa was compelled to abandon Ramah.

Baasa continued the idolatrous practices of Jeroboam, and the prophets denounced him also, foretelling the downfall of his house. After a reign of two years, his son, Elah, was murdered by Zimri, the commander of his chariots. Zimri then massacred the other members of Baasa's family and proclaimed himself king. But the army, which was again besieging the Philistine stronghold Gibbethon, refused to recognize the usurper, and proclaimed Omri, its general, king of Israel. Omri marched against the royal residence, and when Zimri saw himself doomed, he set fire to the palace and died in the flames. He had been king only seven days.

For three years there was civil war between Omri and a certain Tibni who rose up to claim the throne. Finally, about the year 884 B.C.E., Omri emerged the victor and founded a new dynasty in Israel, the most important of all that reigned over that strife-torn land.

§ 3. *The Arameans and Phoenicians Are the Foreign Nations with Whom Israel Is Most Closely in Contact.*

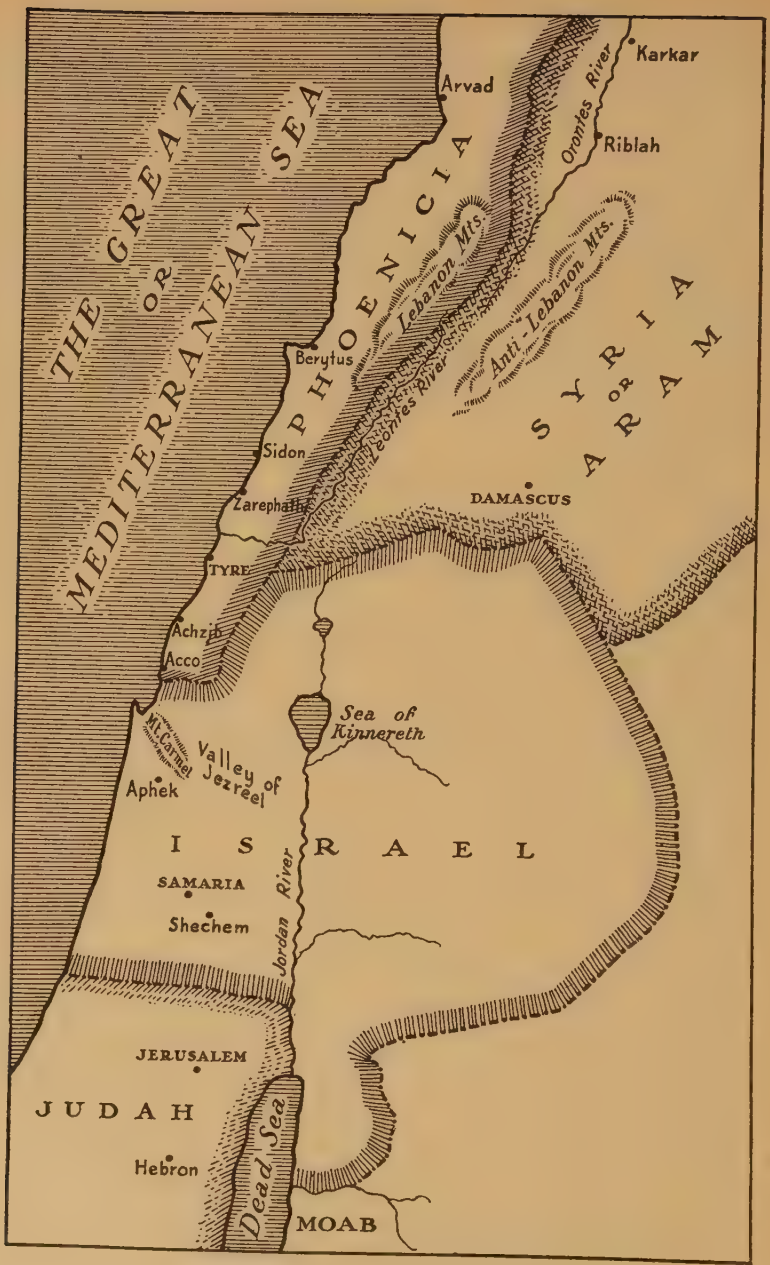
TWO important nations, neighbors of Israel, will so frequently enter into our story and leave their impress upon it, that it behooves us to have some acquaintance with their character and civilization. They are the Phoenicians, who figure in the main as the allies of the Hebrew nation, and the Arameans, who figure as its enemies.

Both Aram and Phoenicia were eventually devoured by the Assyrian monster, but in their influence on civilization they are more important than their conqueror. They were both nations of adventurous and far-roving traders, and they carried their language and ideas, as well as their merchandise, to many lands.

By race and language, the Arameans were close kinsmen of the Hebrews. Gradually their language, called Aramaic, spread throughout the Orient, for they carried on an extensive commerce with all the countries of the "Fertile Crescent." In some of the countries, the Aramaic displaced the native languages. Eventually, in the period of the Second Commonwealth, Hebrew also yielded to Aramaic as the vernacular of the people.

Unlike the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Arameans did not keep their records and conduct their correspondence on clay tablets in cuneiform script * but wrote on papyrus with pen and ink. They used a phonetic alphabet, that is, one where each sign stood for a single sound. The Arameans are believed to have borrowed this alphabet from the Phoenicians. They carried it east-

* See vol. 1, p. 20.



PHOENICIA, ARAM, ISRAEL AND JUDAH

ward into Persia and further into India. This alphabet, with various modifications, became the foundation of the writing systems of all those countries.

The Arameans were not confined to a definite district. Their traces have been found in the region of the Persian Gulf, as well as north of Mesopotamia and far down into Arabia. Their principal center, however, was the territory west of the Euphrates. The Greeks must have confused the Arameans with the Assyrians, for they called them Syrians, and the country west of the Euphrates came to be known as Syria. At different times in this region there flourished Aramean kingdoms of which the most powerful was the one that had Damascus for its capital. "The head of Aram is Damascus," says one of the great prophets of Israel. It was this kingdom that David conquered and annexed. It was this kingdom that later became the most formidable enemy of Israel. But for a long time Damascus was a bulwark that held off from Israel the waves of Assyrian conquest.

While, as carriers of commerce and civilization the Arameans faced east, the Phoenicians faced west. The latter, too, were a Semitic people, very closely related both by race and language to the Hebrews, and, like the Hebrews, preserving a tradition of having had their origin in the eastern end of the "Fertile Crescent" near the Persian Gulf. By a series of migrations and conquests, of which we have no record, they settled eventually on the coast of Syria and Canaan, where they became expert mariners and the most important sea-going merchants of the ancient world.

The strip of plain along the coast which they occupied was about 200 miles along, with a width that varied from

five miles to fifteen. Behind this plain are the Lebanon Mountains which served as a barrier between Phoenicia and Aram. These mountains consist of two parallel ranges, the Lebanon on the west and the Anti-Lebanon on the east. In the valley that lies between them, the

A Modern Village in the Lebanon Mountains

The word "Lebanon" is derived from the Hebrew word *laban* meaning "white" and referring to the perpetual snow which covers the highest peaks of the mountains. The mountains afford views of great beauty, but their forests, especially their cedars, are not what they were in Biblical times (see illustration, p. 81). The valley between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges was called by the Greeks Coele-Syria, meaning Hollow Syria.

Leontes River flows southward before it bends sharply on its way to the Mediterranean; and the Orontes River flows northward until it also turns to empty into the same Sea.

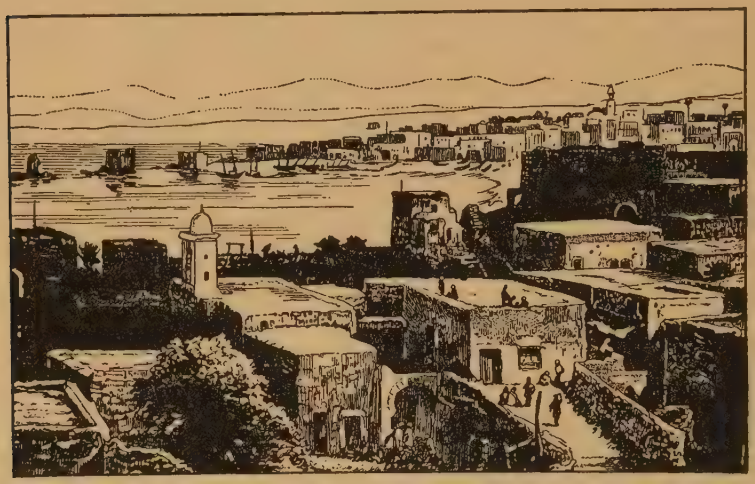
Hard by the coast, and sometimes on an island near it, the Phoenicians built their cities, where the principal structures were the docks to which they moored their ships, the warehouses where they stored their merchan-

dise, and the temples where they worshiped their gods. Among the chief cities may be listed Acco, Achzib, Tyre, Zarephath, Sidon, Berytus and Arvad, the two figuring most in our story being Tyre and Sidon. The importance of the latter is attested by the fact that Sidonians is a name often used to stand for Phoenicians generally. The name *Phoenician* is of Greek origin, being derived from a word meaning "blood-red," and alluding to the purple dye which was one of the leading Phoenician exports.

The Phoenician cities, it appears, were never united under a single ruler, thus falling the more easily a prey to conquerors. In their meager annals are revealed frequent changes of dynasty which were, no doubt, accompanied with the inevitable intrigue and bloodshed. They were thoroughly subdued by Thutmose III, the great conquering Pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty (about 1460 B.C.E.), and remained subject to Egypt until, under Amenhotep IV, about a century later, the Egyptian empire declined. The Hittites then became the masters of the Phoenicians, with the Egyptians every now and then appearing on the scene to dispute their claims. Gradually, the power of the Hittites also waned, the Pharaohs were too busy with troubles at home, so that, by the time David sat on the throne of united Israel, the cities of Phoenicia had become independent, with Tyre in the lead and exercising a sort of supremacy over the rest. The Assyrians, it is true, had already appeared on the scene, but their grasp upon these lands did not become effective until several centuries later.

In the realm of commerce, especially sea-going commerce, the Phoenicians were supreme. They were the most skillful and daring navigators of ancient times.

They were also great colonizers, and Phoenician trading settlements, which developed into flourishing communities, sprang up in Cyprus and other islands of the Mediterranean, as well as on the northern coast of Africa, in southwest Spain, and, it is believed, in the southwest of



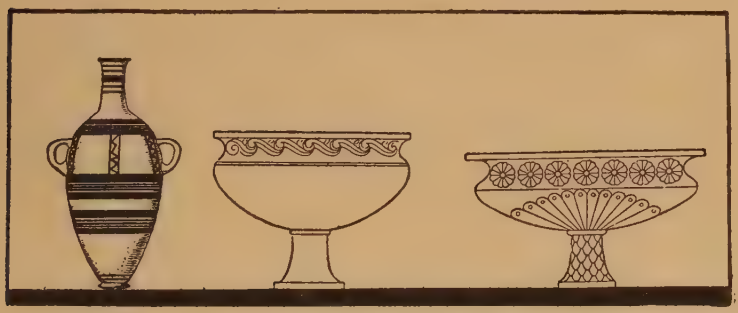
MODERN SUR, WHERE THE GREAT PHOENICIAN CITY OF TYRE ONCE STOOD

The modern town is situated on a rocky peninsula which, in ancient times, was an island. Its name in Hebrew is *Tsor* which means "rock." This island, located nearly half a mile from the shore, enabled the city to resist some of the longest sieges in history. Shalmaneser IV (about 725 B.C.E.) tried for five years but could not capture it. The city withstood a siege by Nebuchadnezzar which lasted thirteen years. In 333 B.C.E. Alexander the Great took the city by building a huge mole from the shore to the island. The city, according to legend, was founded about 2750 B.C.E.

Britain, where they worked mines of tin. From Spain, the Tarshish of the Bible, they obtained silver and lead, and iron and copper from Cyprus. But their most important colony was Carthage on the coast of Africa, which, after Tyre and Sidon and the other cities of Phoenicia had declined, became the center of a power-

ful Phoenician empire in the western Mediterranean.

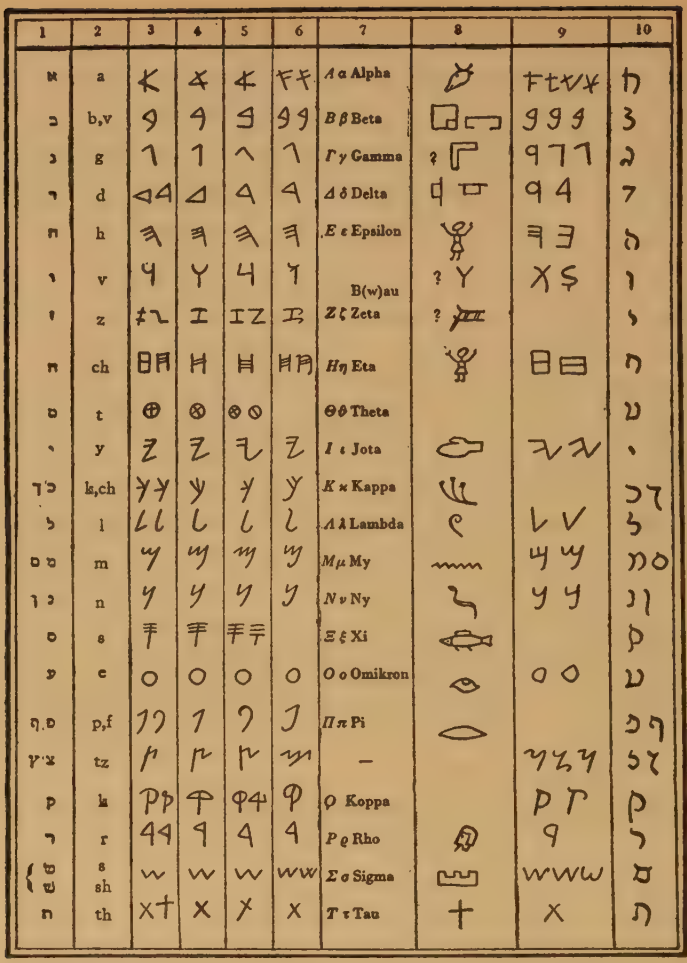
In art and industry the Phoenicians were not inventors and originators. They borrowed freely from the Babylonians and Egyptians. But they knew how to develop and perfect what they borrowed, and how to commercialize it. The skill of their craftsmen, like that of their mariners, was unsurpassed, and without their artisans and artists, Solomon's Temple would have remained only a dream. In their cities they produced dyes and textile fabrics, articles of silver, gold, and other metals, glassware and embroidery. They traded these



PHOENICIAN VASE AND BOWLS

Most of the designs, like the ones on these bowls, used by the Phoenicians to adorn the articles they manufactured, were of Egyptian origin, some of Assyrian. Phoenician craftsmen in wood and metal were employed not only by Solomon but by Assyrian monarchs also.

articles for grain, wine and oil from Israel, for wool from Damascus and Babylonia, for precious stones, spices and ivory from India. We saw how their alphabet was adopted by the Arameans who carried it to the lands of the East as far as India. They themselves brought it to the lands of the West. The Greeks copied it, and through them it became the basis of all western systems of writing.



HEBREW, PHOENICIAN, GREEK AND OTHER ALPHABETS

1. The modern Hebrew *Aleph-bet* from which "alphabet" is derived.
2. The English sound equivalents of the Hebrew letters.
3. The old Phoenician alphabet (about 1000 B.C.E.).
4. The alphabet of the Moabite Stone (see p. 154).
5. The alphabet used by the merchants of Aram (about 800 B.C.E.).
6. The alphabet of the Siloam inscription (about 700 B.C.E.; see p. 265).
7. The Greek alphabet with the names of the letters. A comparison of this with column 3 will reveal the derivation of the Greek from the Phoenician. The Latin alphabet is in turn derived from the Greek.
8. Egyptian Hieroglyphics.
9. The alphabet of the Jews in the Hasmonean period (2nd Cent. B.C.E.)
10. The so-called Rabbinical or Rashi script (13th. Cent. C.E.)

A brilliant picture of the imperial commerce of Phoenicia is given us by Ezekiel, a later prophet of Israel, showing how all the known lands of the earth were embraced in the Phoenician commercial system. The prophet speaks to Tyre:

> When thy wares came forth out of the seas,
> Thou didst fill many peoples;
> With the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise
> Didst thou enrich the kings of the earth.

Intimate relations between the Phoenicians and Israelites began with the friendship between Hiram, king of Tyre, and David, continued with the still closer alliance between the ruler of Tyre and Solomon, and, as we shall see, reached their highest point under the kings of the Omri dynasty.

KING JEHAUMELEK OF GEBAL BRINGS HIS PATRON GODDESS A LIBATION

The King's attitude is one of adoration. The goddess greets him with the right hand and in the left she holds her divine scepter. For a close-up of this divinity see p. 147.

It was an intimacy which affected the Israelites in two important directions. In the first place, it introduced the arts, commerce and luxury of Phoenicia into the cities of Israel and Judah. In the second place, the idolatrous worship of the Phoenicians was brought in to engage in a life-and-death struggle with the religion of Israel, for, with the merchandise that came from Tyre, came also the Phoenician idols, Baal and Astarte. The religion of the Phoenicians was typically Canaanite, with shrines on the "high places," strange and savage rites, and, occa-

sionally, human sacrifices to the god Moloch. Luxury, and the vices which luxury brings in its train, inclined the Israelites only too readily toward the impure worship of the Phoenicians.

It was during the struggle against this idolatry in the period of the Omri dynasty that the first great prophets of Israel lifted their fearless voices.

§ 4. *In the Reign of Ahab, Son of Omri, the Prophet Elijah Labors to Clear Israel of Phoenician Idolatry.*

OMRI, the first king of the new dynasty of Israel, was an able ruler. He reigned for only twelve years, but he left a lasting impression on the subsequent career of Israel.

One of his achievements was to establish peace with Asa, who still reigned over Judah. The foundation was thus laid for the coöperation of the two kingdoms against their common enemies, which marked the reign of Omri's son and successor.

Omri, however, is remembered principally as the builder of Israel's permanent capital. Tirzah, the first capital, had not succeeded in becoming a place of any importance. Besides, it had been the scene of Omri's bloody combats with his rivals. Its palace was burnt down, and many of its people were not friendly to the new ruler. On a plain northwest of Shechem, Omri found the site he wanted. It was a hill that rose several hundred feet above the plain. A city built on the hill could resist the strongest enemy for a long time.

Omri bought the hill from the owner, Shemer by name, and built his capital on it. He called the new place *Shomron* or the city of Shemer. It is the city com-

monly known as Samaria. Later events proved that Omri had made an excellent choice. Samaria became the metropolis of the north, just as Jerusalem was the metropolis of the south. The northern city could not, of course, equal Jerusalem in power and prestige. Nor was it the only city where the kings of Israel resided,

FOUNDATION OF OMRI'S PALACE IN SAMARIA

Excavations in Samaria, later called by the Greek name Sebaste, were conducted in 1908–10 by Harvard University. On the highest point of the hill on which the city was located, underneath the ruins of a Greek temple and other Greek buildings, were found the remains of the palaces of Omri, Ahab and Jeroboam II. Here Ahab had built his famous "palace of ivory," so-called from the lavish ornaments in ivory with which it was adorned.

for Jezreel, situated in the famous valley of that name, became a sort of second capital where the King had his winter palace.

Omri was also a good soldier. He subdued the Philistines who had been troubling his western border. The Moabites, who had thrown off the yoke that David had laid upon them, were again reduced to subjection,

and their king, Chemoshgad, was compelled by Omri to furnish large quantities of wool as tribute.

Against the Arameans, however, the king of Israel proved too weak. Ben-hadad, king of Damascus, forced him to surrender a number of cities in Gilead, to open his roads to Aramean caravans, and to permit Aramean merchants to trade in Samaria, in a special section of the city.

To strengthen his position, Omri determined on a policy of peace with Judah. Furthermore, following the example set by Solomon, he made an alliance with the Phoenicians. And, to cement the alliance, Eth-baal, the king of Tyre, gave his daughter Jezebel in marriage to Ahab, the son of Omri.

WORSHIPING AN ASHERA

The Ashera (spelled also *asherah;* plural, *asherim* or *asheroth*) was a wooden post or pole, which probably symbolized the goddess Astarte. It was an object of worship in the Canaanite "high places" (see illustration, vol. 1, p. 203). *Ashera* was also the name of a goddess. "And Ahab made the Asherah"—1 *Kings* 16[33].

It was a marriage that brought many woes on Israel. Ahab succeeded his father to the throne, but it was soon apparent that the real ruler was Jezebel. Like Solomon in his day, Ahab permitted his foreign wife to bring the cult of her idols with her, but Jezebel went much further than the daughter of the Pharaoh. The Phoenician princess was bent on making her idols — Baal, Astarte and Moloch — supreme in her adopted country. Her indulgent hus-

band built her a temple in Samaria. Jezebel imported a thousand priests of Baal. Some of them she attached to her temple, while the others traveled through the land, setting up altars and shrines where they conducted their strange and gory worship.

Together with the idols, the alliance with Phoenicia introduced into Israel a considerable amount of wealth and a taste for luxury. In the cities, a class of rich men sprang up who took pride in aping the stranger. They built themselves handsome houses and paraded their jewels and chariots. In Samaria, his capital, Ahab built a palace which became famous as the *Bet ha-shen,* or "Ivory House," so named from the large quantity of ivory that was used to embellish it.

In the atmosphere of moral laxness which wealth usually brings in its train, Jezebel met with considerable success. For the rich love to imitate royalty, and the poor imitate the rich. Many people, on the other hand, were in doubt, hesitating between the God of Moses and Baal. The King himself cared little about the whole matter. He let his queen do as she pleased.

There were certain men, however, who did care and cared tremendously. They were the prophets, the inspired men of God, who were particularly numerous and influential in Israel, where they defied the rulers with amazing boldness. Since the days of Samuel and Saul, the prophets had grown in numbers. Also, they were better organized. They lived together, often with their wives and children, in separate communities or guilds, revering and obeying their leaders. Among them were Nazirites who had taken the vow to abstain from strong drink, and not to cut their hair. Among them, also, were the Rechabites, a community founded by Jonadab

son of Rechab, the members of which had taken the oath to live in accordance with ancient nomad customs, to dwell in tents only, to be shepherds instead of farmers, and not to drink wine. The prophets, as well as the Nazirites and Rechabites represented, therefore, a protest not only against idolatry, but also against the luxury and idle life of the cities.

Soon enough, Jezebel recognized in the prophets her natural and implacable enemies, and took measures against them. She gave orders to hunt down and slaughter them, and many of them fell victims to her fury. But they found a friend in the very court of the King. Obadiah, the master of the King's household, saved a hundred of them by hiding them in caves.

And now there stood forth one prophet who seemed to be the very incarnation of the fiery zeal and daring which struck terror into the hearts of idolaters and evildoers. He is Elijah of Tishbeh in Gilead. He comes upon the scene suddenly, so suddenly that he seems to drop from the sky. He appears wherever idolatry rears its head, wherever the wickedness of the mighty needs to be defied and rebuked, wherever injustice needs to be punished. His garment is a hairy cloak with a leather girdle around it. His hair is long, his eyes are like balls of fire, his face is terrible to behold. Now he is reported in Tishbeh, now he stands before King Ahab.

"There shall not be dew nor rain these years!" he thunders at the astonished monarch, and vanishes as suddenly as he appeared.

The fame of the bold prophet spreads through the land, and marvelous stories are told about him. It is told how, through the might of his spirit, he brings back life to those who seem dead. And his prophecy is ful-

filled. For three years there has been no rain or dew in the land.

And one day he again stands before Ahab.

"Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" cries the angry king.

"I have not troubled Israel," the prophet answers, "but thou and thy father's house in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord." The entire house of Omri is under the prophetic ban.

He orders the King to arrange for a decisive test. Do the people hesitate between the Lord and the idols of Tyre? He will show them who is the true God. On Mount Carmel come the priests of Baal and sacrifice to their idols. From morning to night they cry aloud to them, contorting themselves and gashing their bodies as is their custom. "O Baal, answer us!" they implore. But Baal is deaf. "There was no voice nor any that answered." And Elijah mocks them, telling them to cry louder, for perhaps Baal has gone on a journey or perhaps he is asleep. But no fire appears to burn the idol's sacrifice. Then Elijah calls the people to witness, and sacrifices to the Lord. And "the fire of the Lord fell" and consumed

THE PATRON GODDESS OF GEBAL

Gebal, called Byblos by the Greeks and known to-day as Jebbeil, was a city on the Phœnician coast about 20 miles north of Berytus (the modern Beirut). From Gebal came carpenters and stone-dressers for Solomon's Temple. This goddess is modeled after the Egyptian goddess Hathor (see illustration, vol. 1, p. 84). Her headgear consists of two horns of a cow with the sun disk between them.

the sacrifice and the very altar. Now the people believed and avenged themselves on the priests of Baal.

And soon there arose "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." It grew, and "the heaven was black with clouds and wind and there was a great rain." The curse of the drought was lifted from the land.

The account of Elijah's marvelous exploits continues. Jezebel learns how he mocked and slew her priests, and he has to fly from her fury. At length he reaches the wilderness south of Judah. An angel of the Lord brings him food and water. He pushes further south and comes to Mount Horeb. There the Lord appears to him as He had appeared to Moses.

> And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

The Lord, the God of Elijah, was in the still small voice.

The voice informs him that the war against the house of Omri must go on, but Elijah is getting old. So he goes looking for a successor, and near the Jordan he comes upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, plowing in his father's field. Elijah takes off his mantle and throws it on the shoulders of Elisha. The young man knows well what that means. His must be the burden of Elijah, the struggle against Ahab and his house.

Before vanishing finally from the scene, however, Elijah paid the King another visit. For Ahab and his wife had committed a heinous crime. There was a man named Naboth who had a vineyard which the King de-

sired to add to the grounds of the royal palace in Jezreel. But Naboth refused to sell the vineyard. He had inherited it from his father and wished to leave it to his son. Ahab, deeply disappointed, could only grieve and sulk. But his wife was made of sterner stuff. She

DIGGING UP THE PALACE OF AHAB IN SAMARIA

These excavations were conducted in 1908–10 by Harvard University under the direction of Schumacher, Reisner and Fisher. (See illustration, p. 143.)

had a false charge trumped up against Naboth and the man was stoned to death. Ahab now had the vineyard.

Suddenly Elijah stood before the King. Ahab gazed upon the prophet with terror.

"Hast thou found me, oh my enemy?" he cried.

"I have found thee," Elijah answered. "Hast thou killed and also taken possession?" And there and then he foretold the downfall of Ahab and all his house.

For a period of twenty-five years, throughout the reign of Ahab and of his son Ahaziah, Elijah fought the battle of the Lord. Then he vanished as suddenly

as he had appeared. Was it possible, people asked, that he had come to his end in the manner of other men? No, answered Elisha and his disciples "the sons of the prophets." Elijah had not died. Elijah had been caught up in a fiery chariot and lifted up to heaven.

With the passing of the generations, the fame of Elijah and the faith of the people in his great power continued to grow. In the popular mind, Elijah became the special guardian of Israel, the deliverer in time of distress. And centuries later people came to believe that Elijah would appear as the forerunner of the Messiah, the great and final deliverer of the Jewish people and all mankind.

§ 5. *The Dynasty Founded by Omri Is Brought to a Bloody End by Jehu, the Commander of the Israelite Army.*

AHAB son of Omri was almost continuously at war with the Arameans. Ben-hadad II, king of Damascus, blind to the menace of the Assyrian monster that kept crawling nearer and nearer from the north, was bent on the conquest of Israel. Ahab felt too weak to resist him, and was willing to accept severe terms. Nothing, however, but complete surrender would satisfy the haughty Aramean.

He came down into Israel with a large army of horsemen and chariots, and, after overrunning the northern districts, laid siege to Samaria. He sat with his officers in his tent one night, drinking and celebrating the victory of which he was confident. Suddenly the noise of battle reached his ears. Ahab had dashed out from behind his walls. The Arameans were surprised and routed, and Ben-hadad himself barely escaped.

A peace was patched up between the two monarchs, but the following year Ben-hadad was back with a still larger army. At Aphek in the Valley of Jezreel, another battle was fought, and again the Israelites won the day. The Aramean king was taken prisoner. After magnanimously sparing his life, Ahab compelled him to restore the cities he had taken, and, in addition, to admit the merchants of Israel into Damascus, just as Omri had been forced to admit the Aramean merchants into Samaria.

It was high time for Israel and Aram and the other nations to be at peace. For now Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria, was holding the lands north of Aram in his iron grip, with his eyes fixed on Egypt as his ultimate goal. The nations that lay on his path — Aram, Phoenicia, Israel, Judah and the others — he expected to sweep away without great difficulty.

The threatened nations, with Egypt in the lead, finally made common cause against the danger. Ahab contributed two thousand horsemen and ten thousand footmen. At Karkar, in the valley of the Orontes River, in 854 B.C.E., a great battle was fought. Shalmaneser III claimed the victory. Nevertheless, the advance of the Assyrians was halted. It was halted but not stopped. The giant rested to gather new strength before resuming his stride.

The following year Ahab waged his last war. Once more it was against the Arameans, but this time Ahab was the aggressor. The king of Damascus, he claimed, had not carried out the agreement. He still held the city of Ramoth in Gilead. Ahab resolved to wrest it from him. He invited Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to join him in an expedition against it.

WHERE OMRI AND AHAB ONCE REIGNED IN SPLENDOR

This is a view of the modern dilapidated village which stands on the site of ancient Samaria, as well as of some of the excavated ruins. The modern village is called Sebastieh, from Sebaste, the Greek name which Herod the Great, a king who reigned over the Jews from 37 B.C.E. to 4 C.E., gave to ancient Shomron. Into the walls of some of the modern hovels are built in the remains of ancient magnificent palaces.

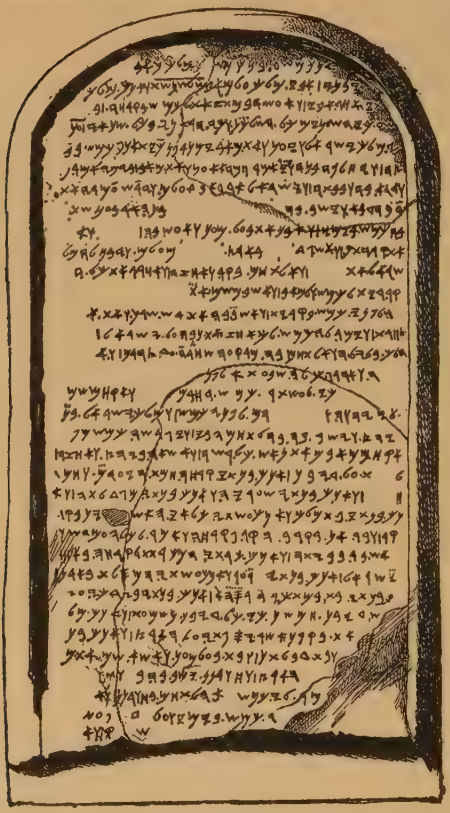
Jehoshaphat believed strongly in the policy of maintaining peace with Israel. He accepted Ahab's invitation, and the armies of both marched into Gilead. A prophet named Micah, son of Imlah, warned them that the expedition would end in disaster, and so it turned out. Both monarchs risked their lives fighting from their chariots in the thick of the battle, Ahab having disguised himself as a common soldier. The king of Israel was struck by an arrow and mortally wounded. Nevertheless, he stood up in his chariot until the evening, driving against the enemy. Then he died. The forces of Israel and Judah were scattered.

Ahab's son, Ahaziah, reigned only two years. He was entirely under the thumb of his mother Jezebel, and the idol-worship which she introduced continued to flourish. Ahaziah died as the result of an accident, and was succeeded by his brother Jehoram.

Like a disease, the Phoenician idol-worship had taken hold of Israel, but the prophets, led by Elisha, went on with their struggle against it. As in the case of his master, tradition has preserved a record of Elisha's exploits, many of them miraculous in character. He was convinced that the root of the evil in Israel lay in the house of Omri. Jezebel was still the power behind the throne. The house of Omri, the prophets concluded, must be destroyed. Elisha bided his time.

Jehoram, in the meantime, was having his troubles with the surrounding nations. Right after Ahab's death, Moab, which had been conquered by Omri, had rebelled. Mesha, the king of Moab, was a ruler of unusual energy and ability. He refused to deliver to Ahab's sons the tribute of the wool of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams which was due. Mesha left a re-

markable account of his deeds and victories. It is inscribed on a stone slab, known as the Moabite Stone, which was discovered in 1868 on the site of the ancient city of Dibon north of the River Arnon. Mesha tells how he recaptured one city after another from the Israelites of the tribe of Gad. All his victories, of course, he ascribes to the favor and power of his god Chemosh. Here is an example of his record, written in a language which is similar to Hebrew:

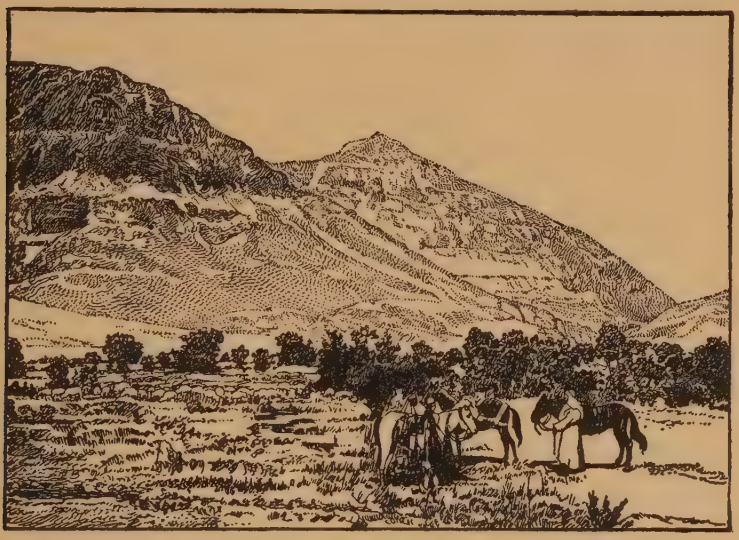


THE MOABITE STONE

This famous stone was discovered by an Alsatian missionary in the land of Moab. The Beduins, to prevent the Turks, whom they hated, from gaining possession of it broke it into pieces, most of which, however, were recovered. The stone is now in the Museum of the Louvre in Paris. The characters used on this inscription vary only slightly from those of the Phoenician alphabet (see p. 140).

And Chemosh said to me: "Go take Nebo against Israel." And I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, and I took it, and I slew all, seven thousand men and boys, and women and girls and maid-servants, whom I devoted to Ashtar-Chemosh. And I took from them the vessels of Yahweh and brought them before Chemosh.

Jehoram, king of Israel, set out to reconquer Moab, and Jehoshaphat of Judah joined forces with him. The allies marched around the southern end of the Dead Sea through the desert of Edom, for the region north of the Arnon contained too many fortified cities. Their soldiers nearly perished of thirst. At the border of Moab, the allies routed the forces of Mesha and marched on to



A Scene in Transjordania

Transjordania, known also as Eastern Palestine, has three distinct regions: the fertile territory north of the Yarmuk, called Bashan or Hauran; the country between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok, called Gilead or Mount Gilead; and the plateau south of the Jabbok to the Arnon, and including Moab.

Kir-moab, devastating the country as they went. The remnants of Mesha's army were cooped up in the city, where they were besieged by the allies. In the end, however, the besiegers were compelled to withdraw. On the walls of the city and within sight of his enemies, King Mesha had burnt his son and heir as a sacrifice to his

god Chemosh, and the besiegers, it appears, were smitten with superstitious dread.

Jehoram of Israel continued to provoke the wrath of the prophets by his idolatrous practices. The influence of his mother Jezebel was still supreme. But her end and the end of the house of Omri was fast approaching. The day for which Elisha waited came at last.

In Damascus, King Ben-hadad had been murdered by his court attendant Hazael, who had then seized the throne. The rivalry between Israel and Aram over the lands east of the Jordan broke out afresh. Aided by Judah, Jehoram of Israel attacked Ramoth in Gilead and took the city from Hazael. But the king of Israel was wounded by an arrow, and returned to Jezreel. There his ally, King Ahaziah of Judah, came to visit him.

In Ramoth the command of the Israelite army was left in the hands of a certain Jehu. This man was chosen by Elisha and the prophets as the instrument with which to bring to an end the house of Omri and the Phoenician idolatry. Jehu was a ruthless, death-dealing soldier. He knew of only one way to gain his end: to slay all those who might possibly stand in his way.

A messenger sent by Elisha came to Jehu in Ramoth, and secretly anointed him king over Israel. When the officers of the army learned of it, they hailed their general as king. Assured of his army's support, Jehu proceeded at once to rid himself of Jehoram and of all others who might possibly claim the throne.

He crossed the Jordan and went on to Jezreel. Jehoram, still suffering from his wound, and accompanied by the king of Judah, went out in his chariot to meet his general. One look at Jehu's face, and Jehoram turned his chariot in the opposite direction. But Jehu raced for-

ward and shot an arrow at the fleeing king. There was probably not a man in the army who could ride harder and shoot straighter than Jehu. Jehoram fell down dead in his chariot. Jehu ordered his attendant to throw the body into the field that had once belonged to Naboth. The rough soldier had a dramatic sense of justice. The same day King Ahaziah of Judah was mortally wounded by Jehu's men, and died later in the city of Megiddo.

There was more work for Jehu at the palace in Jezreel. As he entered the gate, Jezebel, now an old woman, leaned out of the window to curse him. She knew her time had come, but she was resolved to die like a queen. She had painted her eyes and decked herself out in all her finery. "Is it peace, thou Zimri, thy master's murderer?" she snarled at Jehu. The next moment, at Jehu's command, she was thrown from the window, and Jehu rode his chariot across her mangled body.

But Jehu's bloody work had only begun. Seventy sons of Ahab were living in Samaria and the elders of the city, to save themselves from Jehu's wrath, slew all the seventy and delivered their heads to Jehu in baskets. A similar fate overtook forty-two members of the royal family of Judah, who, unaware of the bloody occurrences, had come up to visit their royal kinsmen in Israel, and fell into Jehu's hands. Then all the priests, prophets and devotees of Baal were induced by the crafty Jehu to assemble in their temple in Samaria, and they were slaughtered by his command.

The house of Omri was completely wiped out together with the idolatry which they had introduced. But the man who now sat on the throne of Israel was not the sort of man who could follow the God of Moses and

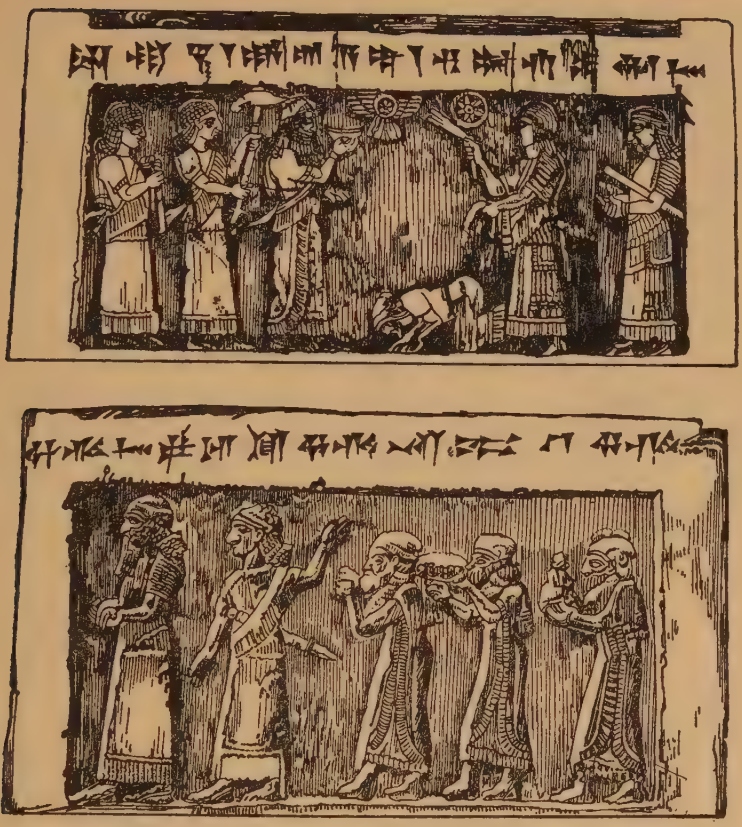
Elijah. Jehu, in fact, reverted to the bull-worship of Jeroboam. The "still small voice" was unable to reach the ears of the bloody warrior and executioner.

§ 6. *Israel Is Brought to a Low Pass under Jehu, but Is Restored under His Grandson Jehoash.*

IT WAS the year 843 B.C.E. when the dynasty of Omri, established only forty-four years before, was annihilated. The usurper Jehu, who reigned for twenty-eight years, was hard pressed by Hazael, king of Damascus. Jehu found himself without allies, for, having slain a princess of Phoenicia, he lost the friendship of that country. Nor could Judah have any friendly feelings for the man who had murdered its king and princes. The king of Israel hoped to be saved from the fury of Aram by the Assyrians, who were again reaching out for Damascus. So he sent tribute to Shalmaneser III, the Assyrian emperor. But the Assyrians retreated and Hazael had a free hand against Israel. He used it to the full. He overran and conquered the territory east of the Jordan. He burned and tortured and slew, killing even the babes with their mothers.

The situation became even worse under Jehu's son Jehoahaz. Israel became a vassal of Aram. Jehoahaz was forced to reduce his military strength to 10,000 footmen, fifty horsemen and ten chariots.

Hazael's successor, Ben-hadad III, came down and besieged Samaria. The city was brought to a condition of famine and would in all likelihood have had to yield. But the Egyptians and the Hittites became nervous. Aram was becoming too powerful. They made ready, it seems, to go to the aid of Samaria. The Arameans departed hastily and the city was saved.



KING JEHU OF ISRAEL BRINGING TRIBUTE TO SHALMANESER III

These are two panels from the Black Obelisk (see illustration, p. 203) where four are devoted to the humiliation of Israel. In the first, Jehu is kneeling to the earth before the Assyrian conqueror above whom are engraved the signs of the god Assur (see illustration, p. 201) and of the goddess Ishtar. The cuneiform inscription above this panel reads: "tribute of Jehu Son of Omri—silver." The inscription above the second panel, which is a continuation of the first, reads: "gold, bowls of gold, chalices of gold." The three Israelite tribute-bearers are preceded by officials of the Assyrian monarch behind whom stand two attendants.

Israel was now at its lowest ebb since the secession, 133 years before. Its ancient enemies saw their chance and seized it. The Ammonites, the Moabites, the Philis-

tines and even the unwarlike Phoenicians broke in upon the territory of Israel.

Then the tide turned. In 800 B.C.E. Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son Jehoash. Shortly before, the Assyrians had again come down and captured Damascus. The power of Aram was broken and Israel had her chance against her inveterate foe. Three times Jehoash defeated Ben-hadad III, the son of Hazael, and won back the cities that the Arameans had conquered. Elisha, just before his death, predicted the victory of Jehoash.

HEBREW SEAL OF THE TIME OF JEROBOAM II

This seal, made of jasper, was found at Megiddo. The inscription, in the ancient Hebrew or Phoenician characters (see p. 140), reads: "To Shema, servant of Jeroboam."

Jehoash found himself compelled to make war on Judah also. Amaziah of Judah had won a victory over the Edomites, and, puffed with pride, he challenged the king of Israel. "Come, let us look one another in the face," was the message of defiance which Amaziah sent to Jehoash. The king of Israel replied with a parable:

> The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying: Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed by the wild beasts that were in Lebanon and trod down the thistle.

Jehoash then advised his neighbor to stay home and be satisfied with the glory he had won in Edom. But Amaziah "would not hear." The king of Israel marched down to meet him, and, at Beth-shemesh in Judah, in-

flicted a severe defeat upon him. He took the boastful Amaziah prisoner, made a large break in the wall of Jerusalem, and entering the city, "he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages also, and returned to Samaria." Nevertheless, judged by the methods of warfare of the age, the conduct of Jehoash was exceedingly lenient. The sense of kinship was still felt by the men of Israel and Judah.

Jehoash was followed by his son Jeroboam II, in whose reign a new period opens in the history of Israel, a brief period of worldly power, coupled with the sudden burst of prophecy into new and brilliant blossom.

TOPIC NINE: LITERATURE

1. THE REVOLT OF THE NORTH

(1 Kings 12[1-24])

BY MEANS of a brief colloquy between king and people, quaint in its simplicity, the author of the chronicle that follows brings out all the passions that animate the actors of the great historic drama. The two sides stand pitted against each other in vivid relief: on the one hand a proud and disaffected people led by an able and ambitious schemer; on the other, a foolish and arrogant young monarch who is the tool of an irresponsible clique of courtiers. The "dictatorship of the prophet," recorded at the end of this narrative, is, of course, the distinguishing trait of Jewish history.

AND Rehoboam went to Shechem; for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it — for he was yet in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and called him — that Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spoke unto Rehoboam, saying: "Thy father made our yoke grievous,[1] now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." And he said unto them: "Depart yet for three days, then come again to me." And the people departed.

And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying: "What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people?" And they spoke unto him, saying: "If thou wilt be a servant unto

[1] The "yoke" stands, of course, for servitude. Solomon's "grievous yoke" consisted of heavy taxes and forced labor.

this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever."

But he forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him, and took counsel with the young men that were grown up with him, that stood before him. And he said unto them: "What counsel give ye, that we may return answer to this people, who have spoken to me, saying: Make the yoke that thy father did put upon us lighter?" And the young men that were grown up with him spoke unto him, saying: "Thus shalt thou say unto this people that spoke unto thee, saying: Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou speak unto them: My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did burden you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." [2]

So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying: "Come to me again the third day." And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him; and spoke to them after the counsel of the young men, saying: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of the LORD, that He might establish His word, which the LORD spoke by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.[3]

And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying: "What portion have we in David? [4] neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel; [4] now see to thine own house, David."

[2] See note, p. 124.

[3] See p. 96.

[4] "What portion have we etc." seems to be the traditional cry of revolt. "To your tents, O Israel!" means: Disperse and go to your homes. The cry, no doubt, had its origin in nomadic days when the home was the tent. Both these cries were uttered by Sheba the Benjaminite when he rebelled against David (see p. 28).

So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the levy;[5] and all Israel stoned him with stones, so that he died. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

So Israel rebelled against the house of David, unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel; there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.[6]

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men that were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom back to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying: "Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying: Thus saith the LORD: Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel; return every man to his house; for this thing is of Me." So they hearkened unto the word of the LORD, and returned and went their way, according to the word of the LORD.

[5] Adoram is an abbreviation of Adoniram, who was in charge of the forced labor contingents raised by Solomon to carry out his building program. The people, of course, hated the labor and hated the man who was in charge of it.

[6] See p. 126.

2. ELIJAH VICTORIOUS

(1 Kings 18)

THE character of the ancient prophet, the strange man who has lived apart from his fellows and appears suddenly among them consumed with a zeal for God that knows no compromise, is brought out fully in the following story, which represents the crowning point of Elijah's career. The character of the people too is brightly illumined. They are a simple folk who must have visible miracles in order to believe. The story is told with superb dramatic effect.

AND it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying: "Go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the land."[7] And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab.

And the famine was sore in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household.—Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly; for it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took a hundred prophets, and hid them fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.—And Ahab said unto Obadiah: "Go through the land, unto all the springs of water, and unto all the brooks; peradventure we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts." So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him; and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said: "Is it thou, my lord Elijah?" And he answered him: "It is I; go, tell thy lord: Behold, Elijah is here." And he said: "Wherein have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?[8] As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no

[7] The land had been suffering from a severe drought, which Elijah had foretold (see p. 146).

[8] Obadiah, as he explains later, fears for his life because Elijah may vanish as suddenly as he has appeared, and then he, Obadiah, will fall a victim to Ahab's wrath.

nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee; and when they said: He is not here, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.[9]

"And now thou sayest: Go, tell thy lord: Behold, Elijah is here. And it will come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD will carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he will slay me; but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest: Go, tell thy lord: Behold, Elijah is here; and he will slay me."

And Elijah said: "As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to-day."

So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him: "Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" And he answered: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah[10] four hundred, that eat at Jezebel's table."

And Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said: "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." And the people answered him not a word.

Then said Elijah unto the people: "I, even I only, am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call

[9] Ahab is eager to find Elijah because he holds him responsible for the drought.

[10] For Baal and Ashera see vol. 1, pp. 203–4.

ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." And all the people answered and said: "It is well spoken."

And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal: "Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under." And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying: "O Baal, answer us." But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they danced in halting wise[11] about the altar which was made.

And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said: "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is musing,[12] or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked."[13] And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with swords and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them.[14] And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied[15] until the time of the offering of the evening offering; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

And Elijah said unto all the people: "Come near unto me"; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was thrown down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying: "Israel shall be thy name." And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would

[11] They halted now and then as they danced to contort their bodies.

[12] *i.e.*, engaged in deep thought.

[13] The question has sometimes been raised whether the early prophets, like Elijah, were monotheists in the sense that they believed in the existence of one God only, or whether they simply believed that the LORD, the God of Israel, was the mightiest of all the gods in existence. This mocking speech of Elijah can only mean that he regarded Baal as a pure fiction.

[14] Such was the conduct of the priests of Baal when they worked themselves up into a frenzy.

[15] The word "prophesied" has reference to the state of frenzy into which they had brought themselves.

contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood.

And he said: "Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood." And he said: "Do it the second time"; and they did it the second time. And he said: "Do it the third time"; and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening offering, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said: "O LORD, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou, LORD, art God, for Thou didst turn their heart backward."

Then the fire of the LORD[16] fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said: "The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God." And Elijah said unto them: "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they took them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

And Elijah said unto Ahab: "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and to drink.

And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he bowed himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees.[17] And he said to his servant: "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up, and looked, and said: "There is nothing." And he said: "Go again seven times." And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said: "Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand." And he said: "Go up, say

[16] *i.e.*, a stroke of lightning. A storm, more fully described below, was approaching.

[17] An attitude of profound concentration.

unto Ahab: Make ready thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." [18]

And it came to pass in a little while, that the heaven grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

3. THE STILL SMALL VOICE

(1 KINGS 19 [1-14])

THIS account of God's appearance to Elijah through the medium of "the still small voice" should be compared with His appearance to Moses through the medium of the Burning Bush (see vol. 1, p. 110). In both the conception of the Deity is remarkable for its exalted spirituality. But "the still small voice" as the vehicle for God's self-revelation possesses, if possible, even more grandeur than the "bush that burned with fire, and . . . was not consumed." Note the profound pathos and sense of tragedy that runs through this account. In swift reaction, Elijah, after his great triumph, is overcome with despair, and prays for death. And "the still small voice" comes to lift him to a new plane of spiritual experience.

AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying: "So let the gods do [to me], and more also,[19] if I make not thy life as the life of one of them [20] by to-morrow about this time."

And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba; which belongeth to Judah,[21] and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom-tree; and he

[18] *i.e.*, the rain might make the roads impassable.

[19] The customary formula in taking an oath.

[20] *i.e.*, one of the slain prophets.

[21] And, therefore, outside the jurisdiction of Jezebel and Ahab.

requested for himself that he might die; and said: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." [22]

And he lay down and slept under a broom-tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him: "Arise and eat." And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baked on the hot stones, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said: "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meal forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.[23]

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said unto him: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" [24] And he said: "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." And He said: "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD."

And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face

[22] Elijah means that he is only an ordinary man, like his fathers, after all. He realizes how barren his victory has been.

[23] According to tradition, Mount Horeb or Sinai was the dwelling place, *par excellence,* of the Deity. Elijah, a spiritually broken fugitive, would naturally wish to renew his faith at this sacred mountain.

[24] "What doest thou here, Elijah?" The question conveys a demand and an accusation. It is, in reality, a self-accusation. It is as though an inner voice were demanding to know what he was doing there away from the appointed field of his labors. Likewise, the answer that follows is an attempt at self-vindication. What lofty pathos rings in the question and answer!

in his mantle,[25] and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" And he said: "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." [26]

4. THE STORY OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD

(1 KINGS 21)

LIKE the other prophets of Israel, like Nathan the prophet in his day, Elijah is the embodied conscience of his people, and he knows no fear when it comes to denouncing crime and wrongdoing. For dramatic force the following narrative would be difficult to match. Note especially the effect of the terse question by Ahab: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" and Elijah's question: "Hast thou killed and also taken possession?" With regard to the character of Ahab, there is something appealing in it that comes out even through the indignation of the chronicler. His instincts are not corrupt, his thoughts do not run to crime, but he is weak and must suffer for the crimes which he permits his wife Jezebel to commit in his name.

AND it came to pass after these things,[27] that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel,[28] hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. And Ahab spoke unto Naboth, saying: "Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee

[25] "And He said: Thou canst not see My face, for man shall not see Me and live."—*Exodus* 33 [20]. Elijah is afraid he may see God and die.

[26] Elijah is then commanded to return and prepare the men, his successor Elisha among them, who are to overthrow the house of Ahab and Jezebel.

[27] "These things" refer to the defeats inflicted by Ahab upon the Arameans under Ben-hadad (see pp. 150–1).

[28] Jezreel, it will be recalled, was Ahab's winter capital.

for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money." And Naboth said to Ahab: "The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." [29]

And Ahab came into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said: "I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers." And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.[30]

But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him: "Why is thy spirit so sullen, that thou eatest no bread?" And he said unto her: "Because I spoke unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him: Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered: I will not give thee my vineyard." And Jezebel his wife said unto him: "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry; I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and that dwelt with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying: "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people; [31] and set two men,[32] base fellows, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying: Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he die."

And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, according as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people. And the two men, the base fellows, came in and sat before him; and

[29] The Jew had profound scruples against alienating his landed inheritance. "So shall no inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for the children of Israel shall cleave every one to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers."—*Numbers* 36 [7].

[30] "Bread" stands for food in general.

[31] *i.e.*, in the place of the accused.

[32] "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death."—*Deuteronomy* 17 [6].

the base fellows bore witness against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying: "Naboth did curse God and the king." Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying: "Naboth is stoned, and is dead."

And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab: "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who dwelleth in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying: Thus saith the LORD: Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? and thou shalt speak unto him, saying: Thus saith the LORD: In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."

And Ahab said to Elijah: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" And he answered: "I have found thee; because thou hast given thyself over to do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will utterly sweep thee away, and will cut off from Ahab every man-child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel.[33] And I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,[34] and like the house of Baasa the son of Ahijah,[35] for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked Me, and hast made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spoke the LORD, saying: The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the moat of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat."

But there was none like unto Ahab, who did give himself

[33] The meaning of "shut up" and "at large" is obscure. It is, no doubt, a sweeping phrase meant to include all males.

[34] See p. 130.

[35] See p. 132.

over to do that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before Me? because he humbleth himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."

5. THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST MOAB

(2 KINGS* 3)

HERE is the record of a military expedition that reflects with convincing fidelity the beliefs and customs of the times. The alliance of the three kings, the dangerous march through the wilderness, the drought, the appeal to the prophet, the ruthless warfare, Mesha's sacrifice of his first born son —all of these incidents bear indelibly the stamp of truth.

NOW Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he did that which was evil in the

*The second part of the Book of Kings, known as 2 Kings (Second Kings), continues with the reigns of Ahaziah in Israel and Jehoshaphat in Judah. Chapter 2 contains the account of Elijah's assumption to heaven, and from that point until chapter 13, the miraculous deeds of Elijah's successor, Elisha, figure prominently in the story. Jehu's revolution and reign (Chaps. 9–10), the usurpation and downfall of Athaliah in Judah (Chap. 11), and the history of the other kings of Israel and Judah, through the overthrow of Israel by the Assyrians and of Judah by the Chaldeans and Babylonians, take up the rest of 2 Kings. The book, of course, forms the basis of our historical text.

Besides the selections from 2 Kings included in this volume, the following portions are recommended for additional reading:

a. Some of Elisha's Miraculous Deeds (Chap. 4).

b. The Crime and Downfall of Athaliah (Chap. 11).

sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the pillar of Baal[36] that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master;[37] and he rendered unto the king of Israel the wool of a hundred thousand lambs, and of a hundred thousand rams.[38] But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

And king Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time, and mustered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying: "The king of Moab hath rebelled against me; wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle?" And he said: "I will go up; I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." And he said: "Which way shall we go up?" And he answered: "The way of the wilderness of Edom."

So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days' journey; and there was no water for the host, nor for the beasts that followed them. And the king of Israel said: "Alas! for the LORD hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab." But Jehoshaphat said: "Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of the LORD by him?"[39] And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said: "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah."[40] And Jehoshaphat said: "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

And Elisha said unto the king of Israel: "What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the

[36] The pillar was a sacred stone which was believed to be the habitation of Baal (see vol. 1, p. 203, ill.).

[37] *i.e.*, a breeder of sheep.

[38] As tribute, of course.

[39] *i.e.*, that he may inform us of God's will.

[40] *i.e.*, waited on him as a servant. "Then he (Elisha) arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him"—1 *Kings* 19 [21].

prophets of thy mother."[41] And the king of Israel said unto him: "Nay; for the LORD hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab." And Elisha said: "As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel."

And it came to pass, when the minstrel played,[42] that the hand of the LORD came upon him.[43] And he said: "Thus saith the LORD: Make this valley full of trenches. For thus saith the LORD: Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be filled with water; and ye shall drink, both ye and your cattle and your beasts. And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. And ye shall smite every fortified city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all fountains of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones."

And it came to pass in the morning, about the time of making the offering, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

Now when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered themselves together, all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood on the border. And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water some way off as red as blood; and they said: "This is blood: the kings have surely fought together, and they have smitten each man his fellow; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil."

And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them. And they smote the land, even Moab, mightily. And they beat down the cities; and on every good piece of land they cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the fountains

[41] *i.e.*, the prophets of Baal.

[42] Music was an important aid in bringing the prophet to that state of ecstacy which enabled him to prophesy (see vol. 1, p. 283).

[43] *i.e.*, he was seized with prophetic fervor.

of water, and felled all the good trees;[44] until there was left only Kir-hareseth with the stones of the wall thereof; so the slingers encompassed it, and smote it.

And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew sword, to break through unto the king of Edom;[45] but they could not. Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there came great wrath upon Israel;[46] and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

6. JEHU THE AVENGER

(2 KINGS 9 14-28; 30-37)

AS a narrative, the chief interest of the following passage lies in the sudden change of scene from Jehu and his retinue to the walls of Jezreel. Observe how this change heightens the dramatic effect. Observe also, how with all his antipathy for Jezebel, the chronicler surrounds her with a certain royal dignity. Jezebel dies like a queen.

SO JEHU the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram.[47]—Now Joram had been guarding Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram; but king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Arameans had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Aram.—And Jehu said: "If this be your mind,[48] then let none escape and go forth out of the city, to go to tell it in Jezreel."

So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

[44] Such were the methods of warfare of those days.

[45] Mesha, apparently, expected better treatment from the king of Edom than from that of Israel or Judah.

[46] The meaning is not clear. Apparently the Israelites were seized with a curious panic at the horrible spectacle and left the country.

[47] Joram is the same as Jehoram.

[48] *i.e.*, if you are minded that I should be king. This is addressed to his officers or fellow-conspirators, who are already aware that Jehu had been anointed by one of the prophets.

Now the watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said: "I see a company." And Joram said: "Take a horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say: Is it peace?" So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said: "Thus saith the king: Is it peace?" And Jehu said: "What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me." [49] And the watchman told, saying: "The messenger came to them, but he cometh not back."

Then he sent out a second on horseback, who came to them, and said: "Thus saith the king: Is it peace?" And Jehu answered: "What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me." And the watchman told, saying: "He came even unto them, and cometh not back; and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously."

And Joram said: "Make ready." And they made ready his chariot. And Joram king of Israel, and Ahaziah king of Judah, went out, each in his chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu, and found him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said: "Is it peace, Jehu?" [50] And he answered: "What peace, so long as the harlotries of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah: "There is treachery, O Ahaziah."

And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and smote Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said [Jehu] to Bidkar his captain: "Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the LORD pronounced this burden [51] against him: Surely I have seen yesterday the blood

[49] *i.e.*, join my retinue.

[50] We must understand Jehoram's moves as follows: When he learns that the furious rider is his general Jehu, he fears that all is not well with the army. So he rides forth to meet him, prepared, perhaps, to proceed with him at once to the front. When, however, he comes near enough, Jehu's expression arouses his suspicion. It is then that he asks: "Is it peace, Jehu?"

[51] *i.e.*, this oracle or sentence.

of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this plot, saith the LORD. Now therefore take and cast him into the plot of ground, according to the word of the LORD."

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said: "Smite him also in the chariot"; [and they smote him] at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes,[52] and attired her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said: "Is it peace, thou Zimri,[53] thy master's murderer?" And he lifted up his face to the window, and said: "Who is on my side? who?" And there looked out to him two or three officers.[54] And he said: "Throw her down." So they threw her down; and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and she was trodden under foot.

And when he was come in, he did eat and drink; and he said: "Look now after this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter." And they went to bury her; but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.[55] Wherefore they came back, and told him. And he said: "This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying: In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say: This is Jezebel." [56]

[52] The stuff, still used, is a black paste which makes the eyes look larger and more brilliant.

[53] See p. 132.

[54] These officers, of course, are eunuchs in attendance in the harem.

[55] She had been devoured by the dogs, as Elijah had foretold.

[56] *i.e.*, so that she shall be unrecognizable.

7. A PROUD KING HUMBLED

(2 KINGS 14 1-22)

JEHOASH'S fable of the thistle and the cedar should be compared with Jotham's fable of the trees who set out to find themselves a king (see vol. 1, p. 263). The following selection should be read also as a sample of the historical narration of the Bible.

IN THE second year of Joash son of Joahaz [57] king of Israel began Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah to reign. He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not like David his father; he did according to all that Joash his father had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and offered in the high places.[58]

And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he slew his servants who had slain the king his father; [59] but the children of the murderers he put not to death; according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, as the LORD commanded, saying: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin." [60]

He slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand, and took Sela by war, and called the name of it Joktheel, unto this day.[61]

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying: "Come, let us look one another in the face." [62] And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying: "The thistle that was in

[57] Joash is the same as Jehoash; Joahaz is the same as Jehoahaz.

[58] The chronicler, who, like the prophets, believed that all worship should be centralized in the Temple at Jerusalem, regarded the "high places" with hostility.

[59] See p. 248f.

[60] This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 24 16.

[61] See p. 249. Also vol. 1, p. 146, illus.

[62] Obviously a picturesque formula of challenge to combat.

Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying: Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed by the wild beasts that were in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and will thy heart lift thee up? Glory therein, and remain at home; for why shouldest thou meddle with evil, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?"

But Amaziah would not hear. So Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah. And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to his tent. And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim [63] unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.[64] And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? [65] And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

And they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they brought him upon horses; and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. And all the

[63] The gate of Ephraim must mean the gate leading to and from Ephraim, hence it was in the north.

[64] The cubit (Latin *cubitum,* "elbow") was equal to the length of the forearm or about 20 inches.

[65] A book which, like the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah, is lost.

people of Judah took Azariah,[66] who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. He built Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

[66] Azariah is better known as Uzziah.

TOPIC TEN

The Downfall of Israel

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§ 1. *Both in Israel and Judah, Economic Inequalities of Far-reaching Importance Have Come into Existence.*

§ 2. *In the Prosperous Reign of Jeroboam II, the Prophet Amos Appears in Israel and Denounces the Rich Oppressors.*

§ 3. *The Other Great Prophet of the Period Is Hosea of Israel Who Laments the Doom Which He Sees Approaching.*

§4. *Assyria, Cruel and Irresistible, Had Begun Her Career in Upper Mesopotamia and Now Reached Out to Conquer the World.*

§ 5. *In 722* B.C.E., *Samaria Is Taken by the Assyrians, Her People Exiled and Israel Is No More.*

TOPIC TEN: LITERATURE

A. Amos

Introduction: On the Evolution of Prophecy

1. An Arraignment of Israel (*Amos* 2^{6-16}).
2. Wicked Samaria (*Amos* 3; 4^{1-3}).
3. The Day of the Lord (*Amos* 8^{4-6}; $6^{1;3-7}$; 5^{18-20}; 8^{9-10}).
4. Israel Doomed (*Amos* $5^{1-7;16-17;21-24}$; 7^{7-9}).

B. Hosea

Foreword

1. Unfaithful Israel (*Hosea* 2^{4-15}).
2. Israel's Guilt and Punishment (*Hosea* $4^{1-3;6-9}$; 5^{8-15}; 6^{1-11}).
3. God's Love for Israel (*Hosea* $11^{1-4;8-11}$).
4. New Betrothal (*Hosea* 14^{2-9}; 2^{18-25}).

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The Downfall of Israel

§ 1. *Both in Israel and Judah, Economic Inequalities of Far-reaching Importance Have Come into Existence.*

FOR forty years — from 785 to 745 B.C.E. — Jeroboam II reigned over the northern kingdom, and to the farmers and merchants of Israel it seemed as if the palmy days of Solomon were back again. The King was an energetic and warlike ruler. Jeroboam captured Damascus, and overran the lands north and east as far as the Euphrates. Aram was at this time greatly weakened by the Assyrians, who, however, went no further south, giving Jeroboam a free hand against his enemies. Moab, also, was subjected and compelled to pay tribute. The north and east boundaries, as they existed in the time of David, were practically restored.

There was prosperity and a sense of security in Israel. No enemies swooped down to destroy the farmers' crops or steal their cattle. The roads of commerce were open, and the merchants of the cities could accumulate riches and luxuries. On all sides the skies were bright and clear. In the far northern horizon it is true, there was "a little cloud like a man's hand" — the cloud of Assyria. Would it mount higher and cover the sky of Israel and Judah? When men are prosperous and secure they rarely worry about the future.

The size and wealth of the cities point to the fact

that, in the two centuries since the reign of Solomon, important changes had occurred in the economic life of the nation. In the northern kingdom especially, the city had developed at the expense of the country. The bulk of the people, of course, still lived in villages as farmers and cattle-breeders. The industrious housewife was still the chief "artisan" of the land. But commerce had made enormous strides, groups of specialized craftsmen had come into existence, and the cities grew in wealth and population. Contact with the commercial civilizations of Phoenicia and Aram had had its effect.

The craftsmen in the cities lived in quarters of their own, and were frequently organized into guilds or trade-unions. There were potters and fullers, blacksmiths and armorers, jewelers and image-makers, stonedressers, masons and carpenters, weavers and dyers. They led a life of toil and hardship; their homes were slums; their capital consisted of their muscles and skill. They made up the class which is designated to-day by the name of proletariat.

There was, of course, another class in the cities whose manner of life was altogether different. They were the merchants and bankers, few in numbers but wealthy and powerful. They owned the warehouses and bazaars. They lived in fine mansions, some of them possessing winter houses and summer houses. They clothed themselves in the finest fabrics, silks from Damascus, purple from Tyre. Their women decked themselves out with jewels of gold and precious stones, anointed their bodies with perfumes and painted their faces. They entertained their friends at sumptuous banquets, feeding on dainties and drinking the choicest wines.

The poor were in debt to the rich. The craftsman

from the slum had often to leave his household furniture or garment in pawn with the money-lender or with the merchant, in exchange for grain. And when the poor man had nothing to offer, he sold himself or his children into bondage to the rich man.

In the countryside, also, important economic and social changes had come about. Large estates had sprung up where formerly there had been many small farms. Of course, the law of the Jubilee Year, which provided that every fiftieth year all land should revert to the original owners, aimed to prevent the concentration of large holdings in the hands of a few. But the law was not enforced. In those days, as in these, the farmer had frequently to borrow money, and was compelled to mortgage his fields and home. Then, owing to a failure of crops or for some other reason, he would be unable to meet his obligations, and the holder of the mortgage would possess himself of his land.

Thus, there came into existence a class of large landed proprietors, men who, as one of the great prophets described them, "join house to house and lay field to field till there be no room." Often these magnates preferred to live in the luxury of the cities, leaving their estates to be managed by stewards. The dispossessed farmers, on the other hand, were compelled to labor on the estates of the wealthy, or they joined the proletariat in the cities.

The "good old days" when men were equal or, at least, felt they were equal, had now become only a memory. In the country, as well as in the city, there were now classes based on economic inequalities. Naturally, between the rich and the poor, other differences sprang

up. The rich became powerful and privileged. They influenced and controlled public affairs. Public officials, even the kings themselves, were careful not to antagonize them. The judges, whom the Mosaic Law enjoined to have no regard to persons and to take no gift, "for a gift blindeth them that have sight," allowed themselves to be influenced by the position and sometimes also by the bribes of the rich.

All of these changes simply meant that the children of Israel had climbed the ladder of civilization and had become like the other nations. For a higher civilization, alas! does not necessarily mean more liberty and justice and happiness. The other nations, the Phoenicians, the Philistines, the Arameans, also had their rich and poor, their privileged and oppressed. Nor is it to be wondered at, that the religion of the other nations became popular among the rich Israelites. The gods of those nations were not concerned with justice. They had nothing to say against oppressing the poor. They made no demands for righteous dealing between man and man. Nor did they frown upon idleness and luxury. They were altogether polite and convenient gods. They kept away from a man's conscience. But the God of Moses despised idleness and luxury. He hated wickedness and oppression. The God of Moses demanded justice.

With the economic and social conditions of the other nations paralleled in Israel and Judah, and with the religion of the other nations making ever deeper inroads among the Israelites, the story of the two kingdoms might have been essentially no different from that of the other nations. It might have been a more or less forgotten story of wars and battles, a far-away din of

clashing armies, and mingled cries of victors and vanquished. Only the archeologists, digging away at the mounds of buried cities, might have been interested in it.

But the story of Israel and Judah is "different." For above the vulgar din, above the rush and tumult of violence, is heard a voice of strange power and beauty, a voice that is heard nowhere else. It is the voice of the Hebrew prophets. It is the voice that, now that the noise and the tumult have died, still speaks powerfully to the hearts of all men.

§ 2. *In the Prosperous Reign of Jeroboam II, the Prophet Amos Appears in Israel and Denounces the Rich Oppressors.*

IT HAPPENED about the middle of the reign of Jeroboam II that a shepherd from Judah arrived in the city of Beth-el in Israel. Amos was his name, and he came from the village of Tekoa, which lay in the hill-country of southern Judah, on the edge of the wilderness near the Dead Sea.

Beth-el was thronged with people from every part of Israel. Jeroboam had made that city the principal religious center of his kingdom, the Jerusalem of the north. A temple or shrine had been set up there, to which was attached a large body of priests headed by a high priest named Amaziah. Rich and poor, lowly and great, came to Beth-el to offer sacrifice. The bleating of sheep, the lowing of cattle and the crackling of the flames on the altars, mingled with the music of song and psaltery and with the cries and prayers of priests and people.

Suddenly a strange voice broke upon the din:

ON THE ROAD TO TEKOA

Tekoa was set in the desolate mountains on the summit of a long hill six miles south of Beth-lehem. It was one of the places fortified by King Rehoboam. The Dead Sea and the mountains of Moab are visible from it, and, to the north, can be seen the top of the Mount of Olives that looks down on Jerusalem.

Hear ye this word which I take up for a lamentation
over you, O house of Israel:
The virgin of Israel is fallen,
She shall no more rise;

She is cast down upon her land,
There is none to raise her up!

It was Amos, the shepherd from Tekoa, who cried those terrifying words in the ears of the high priest Amaziah and all that multitude. They crowded around him to listen, and Amos went on. Every word he spoke was like a hammer-blow. In the name of God he cried:

The high places of Isaac shall be desolate
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

The priests were shocked and angry. Who is this strange preacher of sedition? they asked. Who is this impudent agitator? asked the rich merchants and land owners. Who is this wild and ragged peasant? asked the bejeweled and perfumed ladies. But the fearless prophet went on, throwing their crimes and vices in their faces, telling them how "they buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes," how they "turn justice to wormwood and cast righteousness to the ground." And to the proud and pampered ladies he cried:

Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan,
That are in the mountain of Samaria,
That oppress the poor, that crush the needy,
That say unto their lords: "Bring, that we may feast."
The Lord God hath sworn by His holiness:
Lo, surely the days shall come upon you,
That ye shall be taken away with hooks,
And your residue with fish-hooks.

And do they think, they "who would swallow the needy and destroy the poor of the land," that they need only come to Beth-el or Gilgal or some other shrine, and

offer up sacrifices, and be forgiven? Speaking in the name of God, Amos cried:

> I hate, I despise your feasts,
> And I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies,
> Yea, though ye offer me burnt offerings
> I will not accept them.

Here, then, was a new "troubler of Israel," a new Elijah. The high priest Amaziah could bear it no longer. He wrote to the King: "The land is not able to stand all his words."

And turning to Amos he commanded:

"Go into the land of Judah and prophesy there!"

And Amos replied:

"I was no prophet, neither was I the son of a prophet;* but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycomore-trees; and the Lord took me from following the flock and the Lord said unto me: Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." And continuing, Amos predicted a terrible fate for the high priest, and declared that "Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land."

And yet, Israel had never been more peaceful and prosperous. Jeroboam had laid all enemies low, and they were paying him tribute. The trade routes were open, riches and luxuries were pouring in. Business was very good. Why then had this fierce-tongued "foreigner" come to trouble Israel?

But Amos was not deceived. He was a seer with a burning passion for justice, with a boundless pity for the poor and oppressed. He saw the rich wallow in wealth, while the poor groaned in misery and bondage.

* What Amos means is that he is not a member of a community or guild of prophets.

It was no consolation to him that the same state of affairs existed among the other nations. Israel must be better than the other nations. For had not God chosen Israel to be His people? Therefore, if Israel

Underwood and Underwood.

A Shepherd and His Flock

This picture is drawn from a photograph, but shepherd life in Palestine has changed so little that the reader may easily imagine that Amos, "who was among the herdmen of Tekoa," lived in these surroundings and in this very manner before the word of the Lord came to him and he went off to Samaria and Beth-el to prophesy.

sinned like the other nations, his punishment would be greater. For, says God, speaking through Amos:

> You only have I known of all the families on earth,
> Therefore I will visit upon you all your sins.

Amos, moreover, sees the cloud on the northern horizon, and he sees it rise and spread until it darkens the land. Assyria is an instrument of God to punish the wickedness of Israel and of the other nations. The

doom of Israel is not far off. The terrible "day of the Lord" is approaching. Judah and the house of David, however, shall not be utterly destroyed. Judah shall be restored and rebuilt. Amos, like the other prophets, sees in the distant future a vision of justice and happiness.

Thus, while Elijah, the previous "troubler of Israel," had fought primarily against idolatry, Amos directed the spears and arrows of his shattering eloquence against

ASSYRIA'S ENEMIES TAKE FLIGHT IN THEIR SHIPS

This picture is taken from a relief found at Kuyunjik, one of the two mounds that cover ancient Nineveh. The fugitives are probably Phoenicians. One of their ships is masted, the other is not. Both are propelled by two banks of oars. The artist reproduced shapes with accuracy, but he had no idea of perspective.

social injustice. To acknowledge the God of Israel, rather than Baal, was not sufficient. One must also live up to His exalted Law.

Unlike those of Elijah, the speeches of Amos have come down to us in writing. Amos, therefore, is known as the first of the "literary" prophets. One of the most precious possessions of the human race has thus been preserved. Fortunately, people in Israel and Judah could read and write. Education was widespread. There were many books in existence which were copied

by the scribes and read by the people. Books of the Law or Torah had been compiled as well as books of history, songs, proverbs and parables. The intelligence of the Israelites must have been keen and sensitive. For only a highly intelligent people could have listened with understanding to what the prophets had to say, or have read their words with interest.

It has always, however, been a thankless task to call people to account for their wrongdoings. As Amos says, "they hate him that reproveth in the gate." But the prophet cannot help himself. God has chosen him and he must go forth and prophesy. Says Amos:

> The lion hath roared,
> Who will not fear?
> The Lord God hath spoken,
> Who can but prophesy?

And so, braving the wrath of the powerful and defying their threats, Amos continues to denounce and to plead. God, he repeats, does not want their sacrifices. He scorns their shrines and their altars.

> But let justice well up as waters
> And righteousness as a mighty stream.

But the people are deaf. The people are blind. They do not hear the gathering of the storm in the north. They do not see the rising cloud on the northern horizon. Only Amos hears; Amos sees.

§ 3. *The Other Great Prophet of the Period Is Hosea of Israel Who Laments the Doom Which He Sees Approaching.*

THE reign of Jeroboam II, the last important king of Israel, came to an end in 745 B.C.E Twenty-three years later, the storm that Amos had seen gathering in the north swept over the kingdom, and laid it in ruins. But even while the storm raged without, violence raged within. For during those twenty-odd years, six kings mounted the tottering throne of Israel, and four of them came to it across the murdered bodies of their predecessors.

Against the blood-red glow of Israel's sunset, looms the giant figure of another prophet, Hosea of Israel. It is a bent and sorrowful figure which is silhouetted against the dying light. Hosea's face is worn with grief, his eyes gaze out with pity. The voice of Amos had rung with scorn and threat and defiance. The voice of Hosea is tender and wistful. Israel, it is true, has been false to his God. Israel has been unfaithful, even as a wayward woman is unfaithful to her husband, even as Hosea's own wife had been unfaithful to him. But Hosea cannot forget the time of first love. God cannot forget the past.

> When Israel was a child, then I loved him
> And out of Egypt I called my son.

And in spite of Israel's infidelity, God, in His love, cries out:

> How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
> How shall I cast thee off, Israel?
> My heart is turned within me,
> My compassions are kindled together.

Nevertheless, Hosea does not mince words when describing and denouncing the vices of the people. The worst of their sins is idolatry. For in Beth-el and in Gilgal and in the other shrines and high places the vile worship of Astarte is still in vogue. Israel is like a faithless wife. Israel is false to his God Who loved him and chose him to be His people, Who led him out of the bondage of Egypt, and through the perils of the desert, to the land of the covenant. And Hosea cries in his anguish:

> O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?
> O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
> For your goodness is as a morning cloud,
> And as the dew that early passeth away.

Nor does the prophet hesitate to proclaim the doom which he sees at hand. God will be unto them as a lion, "as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps."

> For they sow the wind,
> And they shall reap the whirlwind.

Unlike Amos, Hosea seems to have been no simple man of the people. He seems to have come from the upper classes, and he was a man of wide education. His knowledge of his people's history was thorough and deep. The great historic tragedy of his people appears to him to have been the division of Israel and Judah. And he also saw clearly through the welter and confusion through which his country was passing. Bitterly he mocks the rulers of Israel who make alliances, now with Assyria, now with Egypt, Assyria's enemy. The rulers seem to have lost their heads. "Ephraim," he cries, "is become like a silly dove, without understanding."

They call unto Egypt, they go to Assyria;
They make a covenant with Assyria,
And oil is carried into Egypt.

But Hosea cannot bear to leave his people without hope. So he pleads with them to know God with the immediate knowledge that comes from the heart, the knowledge which springs not from reasoning but from intuition. Hosea is a good deal of a mystic. Amos had

ASSYRIAN WAR CHARIOT PLAYING HAVOC WITH THE FOE

The body of the chariot was made of wood, open at the back; the wheels were large and set far back in order to make the archer's aim more steady. Note the richly ornamented harness of the horses. The bird hovering ominously above the battle is the vulture.

his gaze fixed primarily on the social conditions of his day, demanding justice to the poor and oppressed. Hosea has his gaze fixed on the individual, peering into his soul, calling on him to purify his heart, to cast out all baseness, and thus to know God. Both prophets decry sacrifice as a means of pleasing God. Instead, Amos called for justice and righteousness, while Hosea says:

For I desire mercy and not sacrifice,
And the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.

Both prophets, each from his separate mode of approach, reached the loftiest heights in the conception of God that the spirit of man has ever attained.

The last words of Hosea are words of comfort and hope. The people shall return and be faithful again. Israel shall lay no more hope in Assyria, nor worship the work of his hands. Then, says God, "I will love him freely."

> I will be as the dew unto Israel;
> He shall blossom as the lily
> And cast forth his roots as Lebanon.
> His branches shall spread,
> And his beauty shall be as the olive-tree
> And his fragrance as Lebanon.

These words were perhaps spoken by the prophet in order to strengthen his people in the midst of their distress and danger. Or, perhaps, they referred to a very remote future. So far as the immediate situation was concerned, there was little enough comfort and little enough hope, for events were plainly moving on toward the final catastrophe.

§ 4. *Assyria, Cruel and Irresistible, Had Begun Her Career in Upper Mesopotamia and Now Reached Out to Conquer the World.*

ASSYRIA, the monster which is about to devour the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, had begun her career more than twenty centuries before as a petty town named Assur on the River Tigris above the Plain of Shinar. Even before the great Sargon, at the head of his Akkadian bowmen, had overthrown the city-kingdoms of the Sumerians in the Plain,* certain Semitic nomads had established themselves in the northern regions of Mesopotamia on the upper Tigris River. Assur and then Nineveh became their principal centers, but it was Assur which gave the name to the country.

ASSYRIAN FOOT SOLDIERS

The first is armed with shield and spear. The second is protected by a covering of scaly mail.

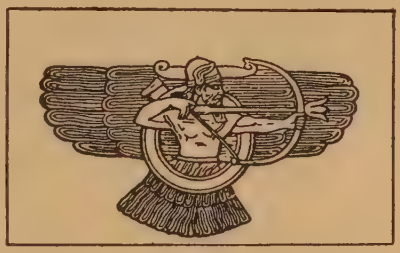
Like the Akkadians, the Assyrians adopted the civilization of the Sumerians, including their system of cuneiform writing on clay tablets. For more than fifteen centuries Assur played no great rôle, being for the most part subject to the rulers of Babylonia and occasionally to the Hittites on the west.

During those centuries, however, the Assyrians,

* See vol. 1, p. 22.

fighting constantly against their Babylonian masters, against the Hittites and the mountaineers of the north and east, developed a keen martial spirit, and became adept in the art of warfare. The region they inhabited was on the edge of the northern uplands, away from the main caravan routes. They led simple and rugged lives as farmers and cattle-raisers, taking great pride in their long beards and curled locks.

Their principal god, Assur, after whom their city was named, was a god of war as well as god of the sun. They also worshiped Ishtar, the goddess of love, the same goddess who was called Astarte by the Phoenicians. The religion of the Assyrians, in fact, was practically the same as that of their Babylonian neighbors and kinsmen, the main difference being that Assur took the place of Marduk as the principal deity. Most of the gods were associated with the sun, moon and stars. The heavenly bodies were believed to have a decisive influence on the fate of men and nations, and the priests made careful observations of the movements of the stars in order to foretell the future. Thus they developed the mystic knowledge and practice of astrology which became the basis of the modern science of astronomy.



THE ASSYRIAN WAR GOD ASSUR

He is represented in the winged sun disk, shooting his arrows at the foes of Assyria. The winged sun disk came originally from Egypt and spread throughout the Orient.

Shortly after the reign of the great Hammurabi, who held the Assyrians in vassalage, the Babylonians of the Plain of Shinar, as we have seen (vol. 1, p. 27),

fell on evil days, being battered by hordes of invaders from the east and west. Then came the turn of the Assyrians. Their kingdom, centering about Assur and Nineveh, had been slowly expanding. Now they adopted the war-horse and war-chariot, and armed their soldiers with weapons of iron. About the year 1300 B.C.E., they started on their imperial career, sweeping westward across Mesopotamia in the face of the Hittites, and driving southward into the Plain of Shinar. They

AN ASSYRIAN MONARCH OFFERS SACRIFICE

From the Obelisk of Assurnazirpal III (883–859 B.C.E.)

On the left, built on a mound, rises the temple or shrine. Within, the deity, apparently the goddess Ishtar, and the monarch salute each other. In front of the shrine there is an altar laden with gifts, an incense-altar, and a basin. The king comes forward bearing gifts to the goddess. Behind him walks a priest. A bullock is led in to be sacrificed followed by four priests, two abreast.

crossed the Euphrates on the west, and captured Babylon in the Plain. Marduk had to yield first place to Assur. About the year 1100 B.C.E. the Assyrians reached the coast of the Mediterranean.

But now their progress was halted. Phoenicia and Aram stood in the way. Egypt, who knew her turn would come if the Assyrians swept through Canaan, aided in barring their advance. For more than three centuries, Assyrian armies came and went. They battered at Damascus, wrested tribute from Sidon and Tyre, and received at times the gifts and homage of

Samaria. Nevertheless, they were held in check, now by the Arameans alone, now by a coalition of the threatened nations, as in 854 B.C.E. when the allies stopped the Assyrian conqueror Shalmaneser III at the battle of Karkar.

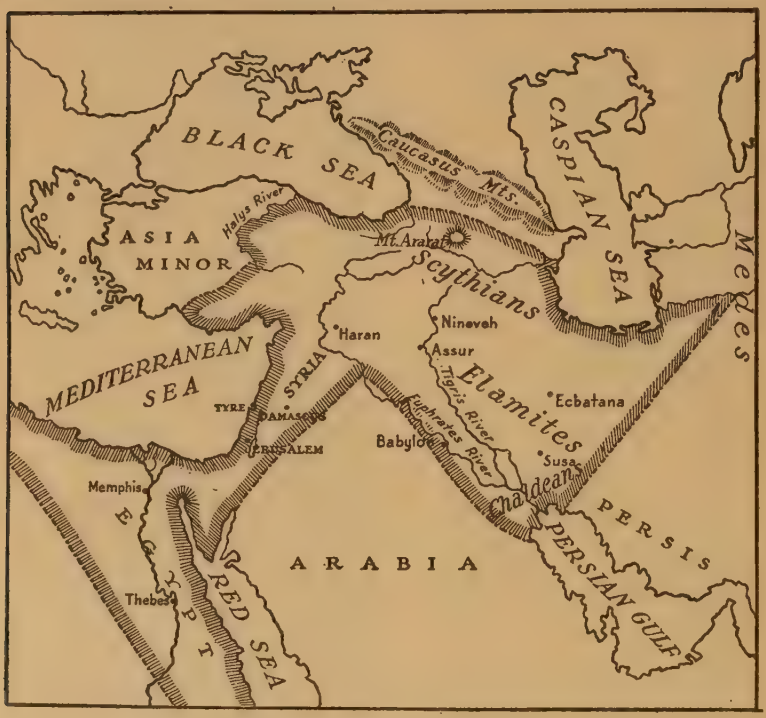
Shalmaneser and his successors were prevented from extending their conquests as much by rebellions and civil wars at home as by the resistance which they encountered abroad. Violent dynastic revolutions, as well as revolts by conquered provinces, kept the Assyrian emperors occupied. Finally, in 745 B.C.E., the very year which brought to an end the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, the throne of Assyria was seized by a general named Pul who took

THE FAMOUS "BLACK OBELISK" OF SHALMANESER III

This monument is so called because it consists of a column of black basalt about 6½ feet in height. It records, in picture and story, the triumphs of the Assyrian emperor, displaying especially the tribute which various vanquished foes come to lay at his feet (see also illus. p. 159).

the royal title of Tiglath-pileser III. Under him, Assyria entered upon a new period of expansion, a period known as the Second Assyrian Empire.

The new emperor reigned from 745 to 727 B.C.E., and succeeded in establishing his power over Babylonia,



THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE

about 675 B.C.E.

(The approximate boundaries of the Empire are indicated by the broad shaded line.)

which had revolted; over the eastern provinces of Media; over the mountain territories of the north centering around Ararat; over the Phoenician seaports; and over Damascus, which he captured in 732 B.C.E. He organized his vast empire by a centralized system of admin-

istration of which he was the head, with officers in the various provinces appointed by him to collect the tribute, raise recruits for his army and maintain his authority. His definite aim was to make Assyria the mistress of the world.

In pursuing this aim, the Assyrians developed the most formidable military machine that had yet been seen. At its head stood the emperor and the military aristocracy. The Assyrian archers and spearmen, supported by cavalry and chariots and disciplined to perfection, made up a standing army that proved irresistible. On their marches, they conveyed great siege-engines, and they developed the art of besieging cities to a degree unknown before. The Assyrians built sumptuous palaces, and carved statues of stone, and reliefs on alabaster, but they borrowed their arts as well as the rest of their civilization from the Babylonians and the Hittites. Only in the art of destruction did they display originality.

The Assyrian army became the terror of the earth, and terror was one of its principal weapons. Cruelty became a consistent policy and a fine art. In the wake of the Assyrian conqueror followed death and desolation, wholesale massacre and refined torture. The sculptured reliefs in the palaces of Nineveh and Assur flaunted the barbarities of the Assyrian emperors with as much pride as their victories. Heaps of slaughtered victims, rulers flayed alive, captives with the heads of their princes hanging from their necks, tell the gruesome tale of Assyrian terror.

To torture and massacre, the Assyrians added the shame and sufferings of wholesale deportation. It became their practice to exile the population of conquered regions to distant provinces of the empire. They were

ASSYRIANS TORTURING THEIR CAPTIVES

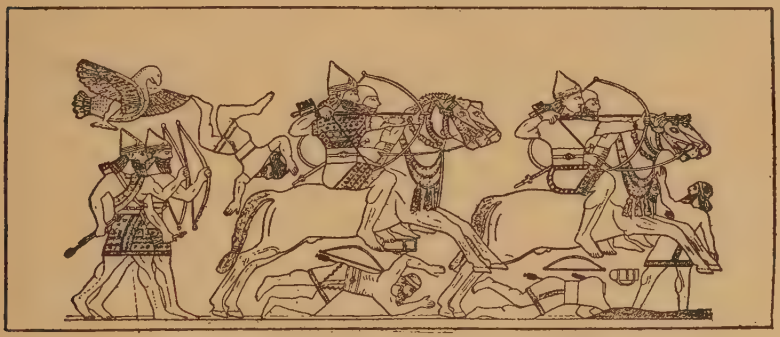
In the center a victim is having his tongue torn out, while two other captives are being compelled to hold him down. Above him another victim is having his beard and hair pulled out. At the right there is a bound and shackled captive with a head hanging from his neck.

particularly careful to lead away captive the important men of the conquered realm, the priests and soldiers, the officials and merchants, so that those who remained were leaderless and helpless. Sometimes they brought in strangers to colonize the depopulated districts.

The dread cohorts of Tiglath-pileser III were sweeping down Syria toward Israel while Hosea was uttering his wistful cry, and intrigue and violence reigned in the court of Samaria.

§ 5. *In 722* B.C.E., *Samaria Is Taken by the Assyrians, Her People Exiled and Israel Is No More.*

THE dynasty established by Jehu, of which the greatest ruler was Jeroboam II, came to end when Jeroboam's son Zechariah, after a reign of only six months, was slain by Shallum who reigned in his stead. The assassin and usurper held the throne for only a month. In Tirzah, the one-time capital of Israel, a certain Menahem, son of Gadi, organized a conspiracy against Shallum and slew him. Civil war followed. Menahem



ASSYRIAN ARCHERS, MOUNTED AND ON FOOT

The bodies of the slain foe, pierced by arrows, their bows and quivers scattered about, are lying beneath the horses. The vulture, sure of a feast, follows the advancing warriors.

put down his enemies with great cruelty and became king. But Israel was clearly going to ruin.

As the menace of Assyria became more imminent, two parties arose in Israel, one of which advocated submission to the conqueror, while the other placed its trust in an alliance with Egypt. "We must yield," said the first, "for Assyria is irresistible. Her legions will soon be in possession of Egypt." To which the second replied: "Egypt is an old and powerful land, and soon

its armies will march up and hurl back the Assyrians. It is safer for us to ally ourselves with Egypt." "If we join the Egyptians," said the first, "the Assyrians will crush us and drive us into exile." "If we submit to the Assyrians," replied the second, "the Egyptians will overwhelm us."

Menahem, however, could exercise but little choice between the two parties. Tiglath-pileser III was on his way. Damascus and Tyre had already offered their tribute. How could Israel hope to hold out? Menahem levied fifty shekels of silver each on the rich men of his kingdom, and sent the conqueror a tribute of a thousand silver talents. The Assyrian left Menahem on his throne and departed to deal with rebellions in other parts of his empire.

Menahem, after reigning eight years, was followed by his son Pekahiah, who reigned two years and then met the same death as his father had dealt to Shallum. Pekahiah was slain by his general Pekah son of Remaliah who became king in his stead.

The new ruler belonged apparently to the party that favored Egypt against Assyria. The time seemed favorable for revolt. The Armenians in the north and the Medians in the east were keeping Tiglath-pileser busy. Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Damascus, entered into an alliance against Assyria. They were joined by Tyre and Sidon. Egypt, of course, encouraged them, but was in no condition to help them. Other powers, however, whom they invited to join the coalition refused, and among them was Judah.

Pekah and Rezin came down and besieged Jerusalem in order to compel Judah to join the alliance. Ahaz, king

of Judah, called on Tiglath-pileser to come to his rescue.

The Assyrians came, and Pekah and Rezin hurried away to defend their own capitals. Tiglath-pileser besieged Damascus. The city fell in 732 B.C.E. and the conqueror slew King Rezin, and drove his people captive to a distant province of his realms. The Assyrians marched on. They devastated Gilead and northern Galilee, captured the cities of those regions, and exiled a large part of the inhabitants to Assyria. It was the first act in the dispersal of Israel. The "day of the Lord" was fast approaching.

TIGLATH-PILESER III

This Assyrian monarch is called Pul in the Book of Kings. It was he who received tribute from Menahem of Israel and Ahaz of Judah. He is shown here with his crown and scepter.

The anti-Assyrian policy of Pekah had proved itself a calamitous failure. A new usurper arose, Hoshea son of Elah, who slew Pekah and seized the throne. Out of a welter of civil war and chaos, Hoshea finally emerged with some semblance of authority. His policy was the reverse of his predecessor's, so the Assyrians left him and his capital alone.

Tiglath-pileser, in fact, faced his legions about and marched towards Babylon. He reached the zenith of his power when, in 729 B.C.E., he was crowned king of that city. His empire, which he knew how to knit together under his iron rule, was the most powerful and far-flung that the world had seen. Two years later, however, he

died, and a new wave of revolt spread through the subject nations.

With Egypt again egging them on, the Phoenician cities were in a ferment of rebellion, and Hoshea also veered about and entered into negotiations with Egypt. He had made "a covenant with Assyria and carried oil into Egypt." The new Assyrian emperor, Shalmaneser IV, set his grim war machine into action. Hoshea, who had stopped paying tribute to Assyria, was captured and imprisoned. The Egyptians left him and his kingdom to their fate.

SARGON II

He is shown here in the typical pose of an Assyrian monarch, one hand resting on his sword, the other holding the crowbar scepter. He reigned from 722 to 705 B.C.E. and was one of Assyria's greatest conquerors.

Shalmaneser laid siege to Samaria. For three years the city held out, displaying amazing courage and power of resistance against the most formidable military machine that the world had known. But the Assyrians were past-masters in siege-craft. They built what was virtually another city around the one they invested. Slowly and with relentless patience, they reduced the inhabitants to starvation, while their battering-rams never ceased to crash against the walls of the doomed city.

Shalmaneser IV died while the siege of Samaria was in progress, and his throne was seized by one of his generals who assumed the name of Sargon. At last, in 722 B.C.E., the city that was "the crown of pride" of Ephraim, the city that Omri had built more than 150 years before, fell to the new Assyrian conqueror. Of the population that remained, Sargon drove more than 27,000 into captivity, besides those whom he exiled from other cities of Israel.

Two years later the nations of Syria, with the Philistines and Egyptians assisting them, again revolted. What was left of Israel was drawn into the new attempt. Sargon came down, defeated the Syrians at Karkar and the Egyptians at Raphia near Gaza. Then he brought a host of foreigners from Babylonia and other provinces, and settled them in Samaria. Eventually, a people of mixed race and religion, known as Samaritans, sprang up out of the union of the newcomers with those Israelites who still remained.

The Israelites who were led away captive were never heard of again. They disappeared in the vast Assyrian Empire like a cloud that is blown away by the wind. They are the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel concerning whose fate and whereabouts all sorts of strange theories and conjectures have been advanced.

The doom pronounced upon Israel by Amos and Hosea was now fulfilled. Israel is a tale that is told.

TOPIC TEN: LITERATURE

A.

THE WORDS OF AMOS

Who Was among the Herdmen
of Tekoa

Which He Saw concerning Israel in
the Days of Uzziah King of Judah,
and in the Days of Jeroboam
the Son of Joash King
of Israel

Two Years before the Earthquake

INTRODUCTION: ON THE EVOLUTION OF PROPHECY

1. An Arraignment of Israel (2^{6-16}).

2. Wicked Samaria (3; 4^{1-3}).

3. The Day of the Lord (8^{4-6}; $6^{1;\ 3-7}$; 5^{18-20}; 8^{9-10}).

4. Israel Doomed ($5^{1-7;\ 16-17;\ 21-24}$; 7^{7-9}).

INTRODUCTION

On the Evolution of Prophecy

THE leading elements in the prophetic utterances of Amos — his denunciation of the oppression and vices of the rich, his contempt for mere sacrifice, his startling doctrine that Israel's selection will make God's punishment for his sins all the heavier, his proclamation of the terrible "day of the Lord," and, above all, his demand for social justice — have already been dealt with and illustrated (pp. 189–195). At this point the question of the origin and evolution of prophecy in Israel may well be raised. By what stages did the human spirit attain to such heights? The career of no other people reveals anything like it; and although students of history, sociology and psychology have labored hard to answer the question, it remains, if viewed scientifically, largely an enigma. Certain origins and intermediate stages have been traced, but a prophet like Amos represents a sudden mysterious leap rather than a gradual ascent of the human spirit. The scientific method has made incalculable discoveries, but before certain phenomena of the spirit it seems compelled to stop short.

But it is no detraction from the greatness of the prophets as divinely-inspired teachers and sublime poets to point out that prophecy shows certain crude and primitive beginnings. Among all peoples, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Phoenicians, etc., the eagerness of men to know the will of the gods led to the rise of wizards, astrologers and other kinds of soothsayers, who, whether in sincerity or fraud, claimed to be in possession of such knowledge. Their methods were varied, ranging from the examination of the liver of animals slain in sacrifice or the observation of the stars or the flight of birds, to self-induced ecstasies in the course of which they claimed to receive communications of the divine will.* In Eastern countries, the dervish still dances himself into such a state of delirious frenzy.

* The word "prophet" is derived from a Greek word which means one who speaks or interprets the will of the gods to man. The Hebrew word *nabi* is of uncertain derivation. It is believed to be related to a word which means "to gush out," referring to the spontaneous outburst of the prophet's utterances.

A prophet like Amos bears the same relation to these diviners as, say, a painter like Rembrandt bears to the primitive savage who first scratched the picture of a tree on the wall of his cave. But we may also recognize certain intermediate stages. One of them is represented by the *roeh* or "seer" who, like Samuel, was believed to be able to answer questions that were dark to other men.* Another stage is represented by the bands or guilds of *nebiim,* the so-called "sons of the prophets," who are first definitely noted in the time of Samuel.† Samuel, of course, combined with his calling of prophet that of leader and statesman, even as Moses, whom tradition regards as the supreme prophet, had done two centuries before him. We saw how in the reign of David the prophet Nathan stood forth as the embodied conscience of the people (p. 24f.), and other prophets, like Ahijah the Shilonite (p. 96), appear on the scene from time to time in the reign of David's successors.

About the middle of the Ninth Century B.C.E. came the fiery patriot Elijah, leader of the "sons of the prophets," and champion of the faith of the LORD. To him "the still small voice" made itself heard, and he represents a still further advance in the development of prophecy. Finally, a hundred years later, when Jeroboam II reigned splendidly in Israel and Uzziah in Judah, comes Amos who has leaped to the topmost reaches of the prophetic spirit.

With variations in emphasis and manner of presentation arising from differences of temperament, the prophets of Israel all struggled against two main abuses. The first was idolatry; the second, social injustice. The two, of course, were closely related, for the One God, who, the prophets insisted, should alone be worshiped, was a God of righteousness and justice.

The worship of the Baalim, Asheroth and other local deities was extremely difficult to eradicate. Frequently, it went together with a recognition of the supremacy of the LORD who had revealed himself at Sinai. He was the national God, who, however, was not always thought of as being concerned with the local needs of any particular community. These needs, the simple peasants believed, were looked after by the Baalim, the Cannanite gods who were regarded as the masters or owners of their respective localities, each locality having its own Baal. It was the Baalim, they be-

* When Saul goes looking for his father's strayed asses and is unable to find them, his servant advises him to consult Samuel. "Peradventure," says the servant, "he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go." (See vol. 1, p. 314.)

† See vol. 1, p. 283f.

lieved, who supplied the Canaanites, the former inhabitants of the land, with the products of the soil, in recognition of which they were worshiped by what was known as the Baal cult. This cult was practiced on the hill tops or "high places," known in Hebrew as *bamoth*. The Hebrews, occupying the land of the Canaanites, assumed that in order to persuade the Baalim to supply them also with the products of the land, they must worship them in the manner of the Canaanites. Thus, while recognizing their national God, to Whom sacrifices were made at a central shrine in Jerusalem or Beth-el, many of the people, at the same time, practiced the Baal cult on their local "high places." In their primitive religious notions, they found no contradiction in recognizing both.

But the prophets were appalled by the demoralizing effects of this religious confusion and of the impure rites with which the Baal cult was accompanied. Even the vices of luxury, the perversion of justice, the oppression of the poor sprang from this confusion, for the people did not think that the national God, who was a somewhat remote God, concerned himself with such details of life as justice, righteousness, and pure living. They saw no relation between their conduct and their national God. He was the God Who defended them against their enemies, Who led them in battle; but they failed to see what He had to do with their behavior toward the poor, the widow, the orphan and the weak. The prophets, however, insisted that the God of Israel was, on the one hand the God of the universe Who created heaven and earth, and, on the other hand, the God of justice and righteousness, greatly interested in the conduct of man, and especially concerned with the treatment of the poor, the orphan and the widow. It was also He Who gave them the land which they inherited, and from Whom they received their corn, their wine and their oil. And as for the sacrifices they were offering Him, He had no interest in them. The LORD, as the prophet Micah puts it, wanted man "to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God."

The prophets not only preached the doctrine that God was concerned with the conduct of man and abhorred injustice and impurity, but they were also impatient with their people because of their slowness to acknowledge that doctrine. Hence, the reader of the prophets should be on his guard against a serious misconception. The terrific denunciations which the prophets continuously hurl against Israel have led many a reader to the conclusion that the Jews were a particularly vice-ridden people. That conclusion is an error. The Jews were not abnormally wicked. On the contrary, the fact that they alone were able to produce such exalted spirits as the prophets proves that they were on a

higher ethical plane than their neighbors. It was not that the Jews were abnormally wicked, but that the prophets were abnormally sensitive to wrongdoing. They insisted on a level of individual and national conduct which neither their own nation nor the other nations of the day were capable of attaining. Nor, for that matter, do the nations of to-day seem any more capable of attaining it.

Because of this lofty conception of God, Amos and the other great prophets of Israel represent so enormous an advance on the early soothsayers or oracles, that they must be regarded as different not only in degree but in kind. The great prophets of Israel should not be thought of as men whose function it was to foretell the future. If they do declare the things that God shall bring to pass, they do so as men of profound insight, who understand the operation of the laws of life. Certainly, such insight is a species of divine inspiration. But their primary function was not to predict. They were, first and last, preachers of the eternal moral truths, souls enkindled with an unslakable passion for justice, great tragic figures seeking perfection in an imperfect world, and poets of a grandeur beyond compare.

THE WORDS OF AMOS

WHO WAS AMONG THE HERDMEN OF TEKOA
WHICH HE SAW CONCERNING ISRAEL
IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH KING OF JUDAH
AND IN THE DAYS OF JEROBOAM
THE SON OF JOASH KING OF ISRAEL
TWO YEARS BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE[1]

The Lord roareth from Zion,
And uttereth His voice from Jerusalem;
And the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn,
And the top of Carmel shall wither.[2]

1. AN ARRAIGNMENT OF ISRAEL

(AMOS * 2 6-16)

THIS oration, it is clear, was very carefully planned and prepared by the great orator. It begins with a recital of the sins of the surrounding nations and a pronouncement of doom upon them. "For three transgressions of Damascus,"

[1] The title of the Book of Amos as here given is identical with the opening verse. For Tekoa, see illustration, p. 190. The date of the earthquake is unknown, but apparently it was vividly remembered in later years. The Hebrew word for "saw" used in this title has the special meaning of "seeing" in the prophetic sense.

[2] This announcement, the second verse of the Book, is like the *motif* in a Wagnerian opera. It proclaims the general tone of all of Amos' prophecies. Note the figures of speech drawn from the prophet's shepherd life. The roar of the LORD is like the roar of the springing lion. The top of Carmel was reputed to be exceedingly fertile.

* In the Hebrew Scriptures, the prophecies of Amos will be found in the second main division, the division called *Nebüm* or Prophets. These prophecies form part of a Book known as The Twelve for the reason

cries Amos, "Yea, for four, I will not reverse it!" And after Damascus, or Aram, come Gaza or Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab and Judah. It is easy to picture the approval with which Amos' audience listened to the indictment of all of those nations. Perhaps the audience became a little uneasy when the speaker took up the Judeans. Then, with a climax of crushing power, as inevitable, logically, as it is pitiless, the orator arraigns the Israelites themselves, his very audience. All that preceded was simply an elaborate preparation for the final blow.

THUS saith the LORD:
For three transgressions of Israel,[3]
Yea, for four, I will not reverse it:
Because they sell the righteous for silver,
And the needy for a pair of shoes;[4]
That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor,
And turn aside the way of the humble;[5]
And they lay themselves down beside every altar
Upon clothes taken in pledge,[6]

that the Book includes the addresses of twelve prophets. These twelve are often described as the Minor Prophets. But the word *minor* is not to be understood as denoting lesser importance or inferior quality. The word has reference to size only, the quantity which we possess of the utterances of each of "the twelve" being small in comparison with what we have of the so-called Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

In the order in which they appear in the Hebrew Scriptures — and this order is not chronological — "the twelve" are as follows: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. Chronologically, there is general agreement that Amos should come first. Space does not permit the inclusion of all of *Amos* in our Anthology: the reader is urged to find the rest in the Bible.

[3] The transgressions charged against Israel — and Judah also — are of a different order from those charged against the other nations. The sins of Israel are violations of social justice and ethical law, and Israel's guilt is all the greater because to him the way of right living had been revealed.

[4] *i.e.*, they sell the poor debtor into slavery.

[5] *i.e.*, deprive them of justice at law.

[6] *i.e.*, they do what the following law forbids: "If thou at all take thy neighbor's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him by that the sun goeth down; for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin; wherein shall he sleep?"—*Exodus* 22^{25-26}. The outer cloak worn

And in the house of their God they drink
The wine of them that have been fined.[7]

Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them,
Whose height was like the height of the cedars,
And he was strong as the oaks;
Yet I destroyed his fruit from above,
And his roots from beneath.[8]
Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,
And led you forty years in the wilderness,
To possess the land of the Amorite.

And I raised up of your sons for prophets,
And of your young men for Nazirites.[9]
Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel?
Saith the LORD.
But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink;[10]
And commanded the prophets, saying: "Prophesy not."

Behold, I will make it creak under you,
As a cart creaketh that is full of sheaves.

And flight shall fail the swift,
And the strong shall not exert his strength,
Neither shall the mighty deliver himself;
Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow;
And he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself;
Neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself;
And he that is courageous among the mighty
Shall flee away naked in that day,[11]
Saith the LORD.

by day became a covering for the night. The rich, cries Amos, lie down on it before the very altars.

[7] The frivolous priests had fines of wine imposed upon offenders in order that they might be able to carouse.

[8] "Fruit" and "roots" carry out the simile "strong as the oaks."

[9] See vol. 1, p. 249.

[10] *i.e.*, you seduced them from their high calling of self-dedication to God.

[11] The "day of the Lord."

2. WICKED SAMARIA

(Amos 3; 4 1-3)

THIS address was perhaps delivered by Amos in Samaria itself. He must speak, he declares, because the Lord has revealed His counsel to him. The Judean shepherd is particularly indignant against the proud nobles and their luxury-loving wives.

HEAR this word that the Lord hath spoken against you,
O children of Israel,
Against the whole family [12] which I brought up out of the land of Egypt,
Saying:
You only have I known of all the families of the earth;
Therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities.[13]

THE PROPHET COMPELLED TO PROPHESY

Will two walk together,
Except they have agreed? [14]
Will a lion roar in the forest,
When he hath no prey?
Will a young lion give forth his voice out of his den,
If he have taken nothing?
Will a bird fall in a snare upon the earth,
Where there is no lure for it?
Will a snare spring up from the ground,
And have taken nothing at all?
Shall the horn be blown in a city,
And the people not tremble?

[12] The word "family" is often used to mean nation. Here Judah also is included.

[13] This is Amos' remarkable interpretation of the popular idea that Israel was specially chosen by God. Yes, chosen to receive God's law, but chosen also to be specially punished for breaking it.

[14] At this point the prophet's authority may have been challenged. "By what right do you proclaim such ominous things," someone may have demanded. Amos proceeds to explain why he is driven to speak out. If there is an effect, he declares, there must be a cause. He begins by asking: "Will two men walk together unless they had agreed to meet?" It must be borne in mind that Amos based this question on his experience as a shepherd in the mountain wastes, where men do not meet and walk together except by agreement.

Shall evil befall a city,
And the LORD hath not done it?
For the LORD GOD will do nothing,
But He revealeth His counsel unto His servants the prophets.
The lion hath roared,
Who will not fear?
The LORD GOD hath spoken,
Who can but prophesy?

SAMARIA THE WICKED

Proclaim it upon the palaces at Ashdod,[15]
And upon the palaces in the land of Egypt,
And say: "Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria,
And behold the great confusions therein,
And the oppressions in the midst thereof."
For they know not to do right, saith the LORD,
Who store up violence and robbery[16] in their palaces.
Therefore thus saith the LORD GOD:
An adversary, even round about the land!
And he shall bring down thy strength from thee,
And thy palaces shall be spoiled.
Thus saith the LORD:
As the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion
Two legs, or a piece of an ear,
So shall the children of Israel that dwell in Samaria
Escape with the corner of a couch, and the leg of a bed.

SAMARIA DOOMED

Hear ye, and testify against the house of Jacob,
Saith the LORD GOD, the God of hosts.
For in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him,
I will also punish the altars of Beth-el,
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off,[17]
And fall to the ground.
And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house;

[15] Having established his authority, the prophet goes on with his indictment of Samaria, calling the heathen nations to witness. Ashdod was one of the five Philistine cities. "To proclaim upon the palaces" is the same as "to shout from the house-tops."

[16] *i.e.*, the *fruits* of violence and robbery.

[17] For "the horns of the altar," see p. 104, note 21.

And the houses of ivory shall perish,
And the great houses shall have an end,
Saith the LORD.

THE HEARTLESS WOMEN OF SAMARIA

Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan,[18]
That are in the mountain of Samaria,
That oppress the poor, that crush the needy,
That say unto their lords: "Bring, that we may feast."
The LORD GOD hath sworn by His holiness:
Lo, surely the days shall come upon you,
That ye shall be taken away with hooks,
And your residue with fish-hooks.
And ye shall go out at the breaches,[19] every one straight before her;
And ye shall be cast into Harmon,[20]
Saith the LORD.

3. THE DAY OF THE LORD

(AMOS 8^{4-6}; $6^{1;\,8-7}$; 5^{18-20}; 8^{9-10}).

PEOPLE in the days of Amos spoke of "the day of the Lord" in the same manner and with much the same connotation as Germans before the World War spoke of "der Tag." It was to be a day of triumph. But Amos, contemplating the social iniquity rampant in Israel, puts a new meaning into the phrase.

THE OPPRESSORS

HEAR this, O ye that would swallow the needy,
And destroy the poor of the land,
Saying: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain?
And the sabbath, that we may set forth corn?[21]

[18] The pastures and cattle of Bashan, in Transjordania, were famous and had become proverbial.

[19] The breaches made in the walls by the enemy.

[20] This place has not been identified. Some scholars translate the word "harem."

[21] This, of course, is directed against the greedy and dishonest merchants who are eager for the festival of the New Moon and the Sabbath to be over so that they may be at their wicked business again.

Making the ephah small, and the shekel great,[22]
And falsifying the balances of deceit;
That we may buy the poor for silver,
And the needy for a pair of shoes,[23]
And sell the refuse of the corn."

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,
And to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria,
The notable men of the first of the nations,
To whom the house of Israel come!
Ye that put far away the evil day,
And cause the seat of violence to come near;[24]
That lie upon beds of ivory,
And stretch themselves upon their couches,
And eat the lambs out of the flocks,
And the calves out of the midst of the stall;
That thrum on the psaltery,
That devise for themselves instruments of music, like David;
That drink wine in bowls,
And anoint themselves with the chief ointments;
But they are not grieved for the hurt of Joseph.[25]
Therefore now shall they go captive at the head of them that go captive,
And the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD!
Wherefore would ye have the day of the LORD?
It is darkness, and not light.
As if a man did flee from a lion,
And a bear met him;

[22] The *ephah* was equivalent to about one bushel. The *shekel* was used to weigh money. The prophet accuses the merchants of giving short weight and compelling the buyers to pay more.

[23] See p. 220, note 4.

[24] The meaning is: "Ye that pretend the day of reckoning is far off and, in the meantime, practice injustice and violence."

[25] *i.e.*, they are indifferent to the national injury which their profligacy and extravagance are causing. "Joseph" is another expression for Israel. The tribe of Joseph, it should be recalled, was divided into Manasseh and Ephraim, the two most important tribes of Israel.

And went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall,
And a serpent bit him.
Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light?
Even very dark, and no brightness in it?

And it shall come to pass in that day,
Saith the LORD GOD,
That I will cause the sun to go down at noon,
And I will darken the earth in the clear day.[26]
And I will turn your feasts into mourning,
And all your songs into lamentation;
And I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins,
And baldness upon every head;[27]
And I will make it as the mourning for an only son,
And the end thereof as a bitter day.

4. ISRAEL DOOMED

(AMOS $5^{1-7; 16-17; 21-24}; 7^{7-9}$)

THIS is Amos' famous address at Beth-el, the central shrine of Israel, which was always thronged with worshipers, priests and sacrifices. Amos breaks into the solemn festivities with his dirge: "The virgin of Israel is fallen," and proclaims the Lord's rejection of their sacrifices.

HEAR ye this word which I take up for a lamentation over you,
O, house of Israel:

THE DOOM IMPENDING

The virgin of Israel[28] is fallen,
She shall no more rise;
She is cast down upon her land,
There is none to raise her up.[29]

[26] According to certain astronomic charts there was a total eclipse of the sun in the life-time of Amos, which, no doubt, made a profound impression on the people.

[27] Wearing sackcloth and tearing out the hair were signs of deep mourning.

[28] The word "virgin" is frequently applied by the prophets to countries and cities.

[29] In the original, these four lines are in the alternating three-beat and two-beat measure of the dirge or lamentation. The Hebrew, here and elsewhere, is further strengthened by the use of onomatopoetic words.

For thus saith the LORD GOD:
The city that went forth a thousand shall have a hundred left,
And that which went forth a hundred shall have ten left,
Of the house of Israel.

For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel:
Seek ye Me, and live;
But seek not Beth-el,
Nor enter into Gilgal,
And pass not to Beer-sheba;[30]
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,
And Beth-el shall come to nought.

Seek the LORD, and live —
Lest He break out like fire in the house of Joseph,[31]
And it devour, and there be none to quench it in Beth-el —
Ye who turn justice to wormwood,[32]
And cast righteousness to the ground.

Therefore thus saith the LORD,
The God of hosts, the Lord:
Lamentation shall be in all the broad places,
And they shall say in all the streets: "Alas! alas!"
And they shall call the husbandman to mourning,
And proclaim lamentation to such as are skilful of wailing.[33]
And in all vineyards shall be lamentation;
For I will pass through the midst of thee,[34]
Saith the LORD.

SACRIFICE UNAVAILING

I hate, I despise your feasts,[35]
And I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

[30] Beth-el, Gilgal and Beer-sheba were places where important shrines were located.

[31] See p. 225, note 25.

[32] "Wormwood" stands for all that is most bitter.

[33] "Such as are skilful of wailing" were, as they still are, professional mourners.

[34] The expression "I will pass through the midst of thee" is the same as is used in connection with the plagues visited upon Egypt before the Exodus.

[35] Do the people think they can avert their fate by their sacrifices and other religious observances? "I hate, I despise your feasts!" cries the prophet.

Yea, though ye offer me burnt-offerings and your meal-offerings,
I will not accept them;
Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.
Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs;
And let Me not hear the melody of thy psalteries.
But let justice well up as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream.[36]

PARABLE OF THE PLUMBLINE

Thus the LORD showed me:
And, behold, the LORD stood beside a wall made by a plumbline,[37]
With a plumbline in His hand.
And the LORD said unto me:
"Amos, what seest thou?"
And I said: "A plumbline."
Then said the LORD:
"Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of My people Israel;
I will not again pardon them any more;
And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate,
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste;
And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword." [38]

[36] Other translations render "mighty stream" as "perennial" or "unfailing stream." These two lines sum up the whole of Amos' teaching.

[37] The symbolic use of the plumbline should be understood as follows: When a wall becomes bent or twisted, that is, unsafe, it deviates from the perpendicular. This deviation will be disclosed by the plumbline which consists of a piece of lead suspended by a cord and used by masons. The symbolic plumbline reveals Israel's impending downfall.

[38] This speech is followed by the clash between Amos and the high priest Amaziah (see p. 192).

TOPIC TEN: LITERATURE

B.

THE WORD OF THE LORD
THAT CAME UNTO

HOSEA THE SON OF BEERI

IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH, JOTHAM,
AHAZ AND HEZEKIAH, KINGS
OF JUDAH

AND IN THE DAYS OF JEROBOAM THE
SON OF JOASH, KING OF ISRAEL

FOREWORD

1. Unfaithful Israel (2^{4-15}).

2. Israel's Guilt and Punishment ($4^{1-3;\ 6-9}$; 5^{8-15}; 6^{1-11}).

3. God's Love for Israel ($11^{1-4;\ 8-11}$).

4. New Betrothal (14^{2-9}; 2^{18-25}).

FOREWORD ON HOSEA

WITH the exception of Jeremiah, Hosea stands out as the most tragic figure among the great prophets of Israel and Judah. Amos is the uncompromising moralist. Amos sees in the impending doom of Israel the punishment for his guilt and the vindication of the eternal laws of justice. Amos is swayed by no other considerations. Not so Hosea. Hosea is more intensely human. Hosea's heart overflows with pity and love and sorrow. Hosea cannot forget that God had chosen Israel because He loved him, and that, with all his wrongdoing, God loves him still.

What adds greatly to our interest in Hosea is the fact that his certitude of God's abiding love for his people sprang from a tragic personal experience. Hosea had married a woman whom he loved greatly, but she was unfaithful to him. He rejected her, but, unable to root his love for her out of his heart, he took her back again. Even so, Hosea felt, God cannot cease loving Israel, despite his transgressions in following after other gods. So he pleads with Israel as he had pleaded with his wife. He pleads for true repentance and for a true knowledge of God. It is a plea that is shot through with despair, for Hosea delivered it in those turbulent years after the death of Jeroboam II when the northern kingdom was rushing headlong to its downfall.

There are many obscure passages in Hosea. But all of his prophecies will repay close reading and study. The reader will be rewarded by coming into touch with a spirit of rare tenderness and beauty and a poet who, with all the sweep of a mighty intellect, expresses the basic emotions that move all humanity.

THE WORD OF THE LORD THAT CAME UNTO

HOSEA THE SON OF BEERI

IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH, JOTHAM, AHAZ AND HEZEKIAH KINGS OF JUDAH AND IN THE DAYS OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF JOASH KING OF ISRAEL [39]

1. UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL

(HOSEA * 2 4-15†)

IN THE following passage the prophet applies his bitter experiences with his own wife, Gomer, to the relations between God and Israel. God is thought of as the husband who, in spite of her treachery, loves his faithless wife, Israel, and the individuals of the nation are thought of as the children. Faithless Israel abandons the Lord and goes after "her lovers," the Baalim. The prophet addresses himself to "the children."

PLEAD with your mother, plead;
For she is not My wife, neither am I her husband;
Lest I strip her naked,

[39] This title is identical with the first verse of the Book of Hosea.

* *Hosea* appears as the first in the Book of The Twelve (see p. 219, note on Amos). Chronologically, however, *Hosea* should come after Amos. The Book of Hosea consists of fourteen brief chapters. The first three deal with Hosea's tragic domestic experiences and the allegorical interpretation which the prophet placed upon them. In the remaining chapters the prophet arraigns the princes and priests as well as the people, warns them of the punishment which is on the way, ridicules the fast-and-loose diplomacy of the rulers, and pleads for repentance and a true knowledge of God.

The obscurities that abound in *Hosea* are believed to be the result of errors by copyists as well as of additions and other modifications made by later editors.

† Some parts of these verses have been omitted.

And set her as in the day that she was born,
And make her as a wilderness,
And set her like a dry land,
And slay her with thirst.

ISRAEL'S TREASON

And I will not have compassion upon her children;
For she said: "I will go after my lovers,
That give me my bread and my water,
My wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink." [40]
Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns,
And I will make a wall against her,
That she shall not find her paths.
And she shall run after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them,
And she shall seek them, but shall not find them;
Then shall she say: "I will go and return to my first husband;
For then was it better with me than now."
For she did not know that it was I that gave her
The corn, and the wine, and the oil,
And multiplied unto her silver and gold,
Which they used for Baal.[41]

HER PUNISHMENT

Therefore will I take back My corn in the time thereof,
And My wine in the season thereof,
And will snatch away My wool and My flax
And none shall deliver her out of My hand.
I will also cause all her mirth to cease,
Her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths,
And all her appointed seasons.
And I will lay waste her vines and her fig-trees,
Whereof she hath said: "These are my hire
That my lovers have given me";
And I will make them a forest,
And the beasts of the field shall eat them.
And I will visit upon her the days of the Baalim,[42]
Wherein she offered unto them,
And decked herself with her earrings and her jewels,
And went after her lovers,
And forgot Me, saith the LORD.

[40] See p. 216. "The lovers," of course, were the Baalim.
[41] *i.e.*, for making images of Baal.
[42] *i.e.*, punish her for the days when she worshiped the Baalim.

2. ISRAEL'S GUILT AND PUNISHMENT

(HOSEA 4^{1-3}; $^{6-9}$; 5^{8-15}; 6^{1-11})

THESE passages from Hosea reveal the prophet's conflicting emotions as he contemplates the corruption and folly of his people. Jeroboam II has died and the anarchy and violence which culminated in the first catastrophe are in full swing. The dictates of justice compel the prophet to declare the doom which the nation deserves, and especially to denounce the misdeeds of the priests and rulers. But, at the same time, Hosea is filled with grief, and pleads with Ephraim to repent and to know God.

INIQUITY RAMPANT

HEAR the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel!
For the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land,
Because there is no truth, nor mercy,
Nor knowledge of God in the land.
Swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery![43]
They break all bounds, and blood toucheth blood,[44]
Therefore doth the land mourn,
And everyone that dwelleth therein doth languish,
With the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven;
Yea, the fishes of the sea also are taken away.

WICKED PRIESTS

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge;
Because thou hast rejected knowledge,
I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to Me;
Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God,
I also will forget thy children.[45]

The more they were increased,[46] the more they sinned against Me;
I will change their glory into shame.

[43] *i.e.*, there is nothing but swearing and lying, etc.

[44] *i.e.*, one act of bloodshed follows immediately upon another.

[45] This is addressed to the priests who neglect their duty of instructing the people in the law of God.

[46] *i.e.*, the priests who entered into the calling from motives of gain.

They feed on the sin of My people,
And set their heart on their iniquity.[47]
And it is like people, like priest;
And I will punish him for his ways,
And will recompense him his doings.

IMPENDING PUNISHMENT

Blow ye the horn in Gibeah,
And the trumpet in Ramah;
Sound an alarm at Beth-aven:
"Behind thee, O Benjamin!" [48]
Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke;
Among the tribes of Israel do I make known that which shall surely be.

The princes of Judah are like them that remove the landmark;[49]
I will pour out My wrath upon them like water.

Oppressed is Ephraim, crushed in his right;
Because he willingly walked after filth.
Therefore am I unto Ephraim as a moth,[50]
And to the house of Judah as rottenness.

ASSYRIA NO HELP

And when Ephraim saw his sickness,
And Judah his wound,
Ephraim went to Assyria,[51]

[47] The wicked priests profit from the sacrifices the people bring in atonement for their sins, hence they want the people to sin.

[48] Beth-aven is the same as Beth-el and means "the house of vanity, or sin," a parody on Israel's central place of worship. This town as well as Gibeah and Ramah were in the territory of Benjamin. "Behind thee, O Benjamin" is Benjamin's ancient war cry. The picture is that of the invaders sweeping down to the southern borders of Israel.

[49] "They that remove the landmark" were those who dispossessed the poor of their landed property; who, as Isaiah described them, "join house to house," and "lay field to field." The law in Deuteronomy (19[14]) states: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance which thou shalt inherit, in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it."

[50] The moth is a destructive insect.

[51] The reference is probably to Menahem who sent the Assyrian emperor Tiglath-pileser III a tribute of 1,000 silver talents (see p. 208).

And sent to King Contentious;[52]
But he is not able to heal you,
Neither shall he cure you of your wound.
For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion,
And as a young lion to the house of Judah;
I, even I, will tear and go away,
I will take away;[53] and there shall be none to deliver.

WORDS OF REPENTANCE

I will go and return to My place,[54]
Till they acknowledge their guilt, and seek My face;
In their trouble they will seek Me earnestly:
"Come, and let us return unto the LORD;
For He hath torn, and He will heal us,
He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.
After two days will He revive us,
On the third day He will raise us up,[55] that we may live
in His presence.
And let us know, eagerly strive to know the LORD,
His going forth is sure as the morning;
And He shall come unto us as the rain,
As the latter rain that watereth the earth."

UNSTABLE AS THE MORNING MIST

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?
O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
For your goodness is as a morning cloud,[56]
And as the dew that early passeth away.
Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets,
I have slain them by the words of My mouth;
And thy judgment goeth forth as the light.[57]
For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,
And the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.[58]

[52] A nickname for the Assyrian king, referring to his quarrelsomeness.

[53] *i.e.*, the prey.

[54] Mount Sinai, which was regarded as the LORD's special abode.

[55] *i.e.*, He will restore us after a short time.

[56] "Your goodness" refers to the prayer of repentance which the LORD will not accept because their repentance has no stability. The morning "mist or cloud" of Palestine, which often hides the entire landscape, vanishes with surprising suddenness as soon as the first ray of the sun appears. The prophet therefore uses it as a symbol of instability.

[57] An obscure line. Others have it: "And My judgment goeth forth like the light."

[58] These two lines sum up the teachings of Hosea.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

But they like men have transgressed the covenant;
There have they dealt treacherously against Me.
Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity,
It is covered with footprints of blood.
And as troops of robbers wait for a man,
So doth the company of priests;
They murder in the way toward Shechem;
Yea, they commit enormity.
In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing;
There harlotry is found in Ephraim,
Israel is defiled.
Also, O Judah, there is a harvest appointed for thee!

3. GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL

(Hosea 11 1-4; 8-11)

COMPARING God's relationship to Israel with that of a father to his son, Hosea describes God's infinite love for His people, despite their idolatry and other transgressions, in images of glowing tenderness and beauty.

WHEN Israel was a child, then I loved him,
And out of Egypt I called My son.

ISRAEL REBELLIOUS

The more they [59] called them, the more they went from them; [59]
They sacrificed unto the Baalim,
And offered to graven images.

And I, I taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them by their arms;
But they know not that I healed them.
I drew them with cords of a man,[60]
With bands of love;
And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws,
And I fed them gently.

[59] "They" and "them" make the line obscure. Those words should probably be "I" and "Me."

[60] One explanation of this line is that God drew Israel's burden with cords as the humane ox-driver helps his animals in an emergency.

GOD'S LOVE EVERLASTING

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
How shall I surrender thee, Israel?
How shall I make thee as Admah?
How shall I set thee as Zeboim?[61]

My heart is turned within Me,
My compassions are kindled together.
I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger,
I will not return to destroy Ephraim;
For I am God, and not man,
The Holy One in the midst of thee,
And I will not come in fury.

They shall walk after the LORD,
Who shall roar like a lion;
For He shall roar,
And the children shall come trembling from the west.
They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt,
And as a dove out of the land of Assyria;
And I will make them to dwell in their houses,
Saith the LORD.

4. NEW BETROTHAL

(HOSEA 14[2-9]; 2[18-25])

THIS is Hosea's vision of "the end of days," for he, like most of the other great prophets, saw in the distant future, through the darkness of the present, the glimmer of a new dawn. Hosea describes it in terms of the marital relationship, for, even as he himself had taken back his erring wife because he loved her, God will, in that day, take back his erring people Israel in a new betrothal.

RETURN, O Israel, unto the LORD thy God;
For thou hast stumbled in thine iniquity.

TRUE REPENTANCE

Take with you words,[62]
And return unto the LORD;

[61] Admah and Zeboim were two cities that were destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah.

[62] *i.e.*, words that spring from genuine repentance, like those that follow.

Say unto Him: "Forgive all iniquity,
And accept that which is good;[63]
So will we render for bullocks the offering of our lips.[64]
Asshur shall not save us;
We will not ride upon horses;[65]
Neither will we call any more the work of our hands
our gods;
For in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy."

FORGIVENESS AND NEW LIFE

I will heal their backsliding,
I will love them freely;
For Mine anger is turned away from him.
I will be as the dew unto Israel;
He shall blossom as the lily,
And cast forth his roots as Lebanon.[66]
His branches shall spread,
And his beauty shall be as the olive-tree,
And his fragrance as Lebanon.[67]

They that dwell under his shadow[68] shall again
Make corn to grow,
And shall blossom as the vine;
The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

Ephraim [shall say]:
"What have I to do any more with idols?"
As for Me, I respond and look on him;
I am like a leafy cypress-tree;
From Me is thy fruit found.

And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD,
That thou shalt call Me Ishi,

[63] *i.e.*, our repentance.

[64] *i.e.*, instead of sacrifices (bullocks) we will render unto Thee praise and words of true repentance.

[65] Horses were obtained from Egypt. The meaning, of course, is: We will no longer put our trust in Assyria or in Egypt.

[66] As the cedars of Lebanon, famous for their strength and beauty (see illustration, p. 81).

[67] Lebanon is fragrant with the smell of the pines and other aromatic plants.

[68] "His shadow" means, probably, the shadow of Lebanon or Mt. Hermon, the outstanding peak of the Anti-Lebanon range, which dominates Palestine.

And shalt call Me no more Baali.[69]
For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth,
And they shall no more be mentioned by their name.

PEACE AND SAFETY

And in that day will I make a covenant for them
With the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven,
And with the creeping things of the ground;
And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land,
And will make them to lie down safely.

NEW BETROTHAL

And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever;
Yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in justice,
And in loving kindness, and in compassion.
And I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness;
And thou shalt know the LORD.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
I will respond, saith the LORD, I will respond to the heavens,
And they shall respond to the earth;
And the earth shall respond to the corn, and the wine, and the oil;
And they shall respond to Jezreel.[70]

And I will sow her unto Me in the land;
And I will have compassion upon her that had not obtained compassion;
And I will say to them that were not My people: "Thou art My people";
And they shall say: "Thou art my God."

[69] *Ishi* means "my husband," *Baali*, "my master." The latter word may also be used of a husband, but Israel shall no more use it, because it suggests the Baalim or the idols of the Phoenicians.

[70] *Jezreel* means "whom God soweth," and stands for Israel. The passage describes the productive forces as a sort of chorus in which Israel (Jezreel) calls on "the corn, and the wine, and the oil," the latter on the earth, the earth on the heavens (for rain, of course), and the heavens on God.

TOPIC ELEVEN

Judah and Isaiah

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Judah and Isaiah

§ 1. *Through Varying Fortunes the House of David Continues to Reign in Judah.*

§ 2. *After the Prosperous Reign of Uzziah, King Ahaz Becomes a Vassal of Assyria Whose Cult He Brings into Jerusalem.*

§ 3. *The Prophet and Statesman Isaiah, Champion of the Poor and Oppressed, Is the Dominant Figure of the Age.*

§ 4. *Another Great Prophet of the Age Is the Peasant Micah Who Declaims against the Vices of the City.*

§ 5. *The Young King Hezekiah, Spurred on by Isaiah, Begins His Reign with a Widespread Religious Reform.*

§ 6. *The Assyrian Emperor Sennacherib Sets Out to Take Jerusalem, but, even as Isaiah Foretells, He Meets with Disaster, and Judah Is Saved.*

§ 7. *Amid Sorrow and Foreboding, Isaiah Is Upheld by His Faith in the Saving Remnant, the Perfect King or Messiah, and Universal Justice and Peace.*

TOPIC ELEVEN: LITERATURE

A. Isaiah

Foreword

1. The Consecration of the Prophet (*Isaiah* 6).
2. The Vineyard of the Lord (*Isaiah* 5^{1-24}; 3^{16-26}).
3. An Arraignment of Israel (*Isaiah* 9^{7-16}; 10^{1-4}; 5^{26-29}; 28^{1-4}).
4. The Iniquity of Jerusalem (*Isaiah* 1^{2-17}; $^{21-23}$; 31^{1-3}; 29^{9-10}; $^{13-14}$).
5. Sennacherib's Blasphemy and Defeat (*Isaiah* 36; 37^{1-4}; $^{21-38}$).
6. Proud Assyria Denounced (*Isaiah* 10^{5-11}; $^{13-19}$; $^{28-34}$).
7. "The End of Days" (*Isaiah* 2^{1-4}; 11^{1-12}).

B. Micah

Foreword

1. The Doom of Samaria and Jerusalem (*Micah* 1^{1-9}).
2. Wicked Rulers and False Prophets (*Micah* 2^{1-3}; 3).
3. "What Doth the Lord Require of Thee?" (*Micah* 6^{1-8}).

TOPIC ELEVEN

Judah and Isaiah

§ 1. *Through Varying Fortunes, the House of David Continues to Reign in Judah.*

THE whirlwind from the north had come down, and the greater part of the Hebrew nation was swept away and lost. Little Judah alone was left to be the keeper of the nation's destiny. What, during the two centuries and more of the checkered career of Israel, had been happening in the kingdom of the south?

We saw how Solomon's son Rehoboam, soon after the secession, attempted to reconquer the north, and might have succeeded but for the invasion from Egypt. Rehoboam foresaw the danger, and tried to meet it by fortifying the cities of Judah and Benjamin, placing garrisons and supplies in each of them. But, in the fifth year of his reign, the Pharaoh Shishak came up with a large army of horsemen, footmen and chariots, overran the country, and encamped against Jerusalem. Before the Pharaoh departed, the king of Judah had to give up a good part of the treasures of his palace and Temple, including the gold shields of Solomon which were kept in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

After a reign of seventeen years, Rehoboam died and was succeeded by his son Abijah who continued fighting with the king of Israel. He invaded the territory of his rival and won an important victory. He

was followed after three years by his son Asa whose long reign of forty-one years witnessed important changes in the foreign as well as domestic policy of Judah.

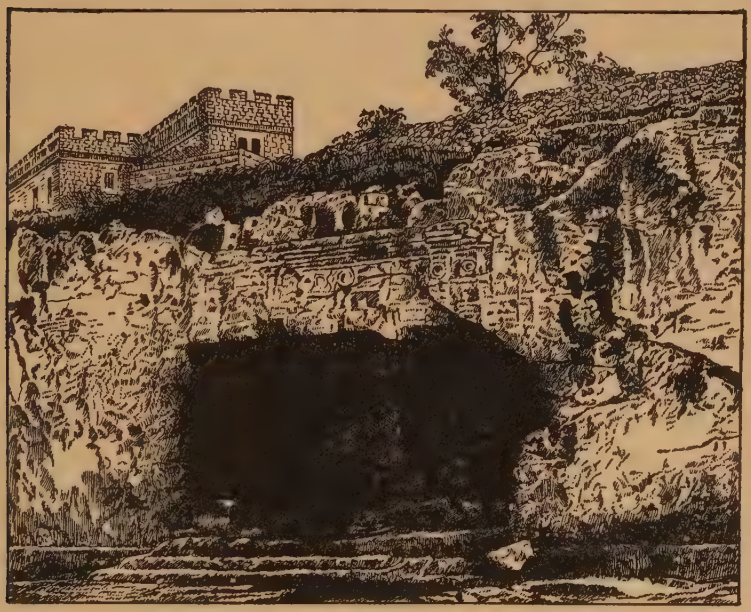
Asa introduced a complete change in religious policy. His two predecessors had permitted idol-worship to flourish throughout the land. Not even the Temple built by Solomon could keep the worship pure. Spurred on by the prophets, the new ruler worked hard to clear the land of idolatry, pulling down the unclean shrines on the "high places" and destroying the images. Asa even removed his mother Maacah "from being queen" because of her idol-worship. The King cut down her idol and burnt it.

The Temple in Jerusalem, dedicated to the pure worship of God, grew in prestige, and the idea that sacrifices could properly be made in the Temple only, gained ground among the people. The struggle against idolatry and for a centralized worship was, however, only begun. It will take several centuries before its triumph will be complete.

In his troubles with Israel, Asa, as we saw (p. 131), adopted the policy of bribing a third power to intervene on his side against Baasa, king of Israel. After the Arameans had compelled Baasa to abandon the fortress of Ramah, Asa seized it and dismantled it. He made use of the materials to strengthen his own fortifications in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. Asa triumphed, but it is doubtful wisdom to invite a third party to intervene in quarrels between brothers. The stranger often gains the ascendancy over both.

Asa was even more successful against an enemy that appeared in the south where Judah was invaded by a

horde of Africans. They were probably the Pharaoh's Lybian and other negro mercenaries. Quickly the King mobilized his forces, moved south, and at Mareshah inflicted a crushing defeat upon the invaders. Asa brought a vast amount of booty back to Jerusalem. For the



THE "TOMBS OF THE KINGS" NEAR JERUSALEM

These tombs are located north of the city, about half a mile from the Damascus Gate, along the road to Nablus. The place consists of a large square chamber with passages leading to other chambers. A tradition has fixed this place as the burial ground of the kings of Judah.

rest of his long reign Judah enjoyed peace, and, when in 875 B.C.E. Asa died, he left a well-fortified and compact little kingdom to his son and successor Jehoshaphat.

The new king followed in his father's footsteps by laboring to stamp out idolatry within his borders. He tried also to imitate Solomon by fitting out a merchant fleet for Ophir, the land of gold. But the enterprise

ended in disaster, the fleet being wrecked near the port of Ezion-geber.

With Israel, where Ahab and Jezebel were the rulers, Jehoshaphat maintained a policy of peace and alliance. To cement the relations between the two kingdoms, Jehoshaphat chose Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, as a wife for his son Jehoram. Moreover, as we saw (p. 155), Judah joined Israel in the expedition against Mesha, king of Moab.

Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram, incited, no doubt, by his wife Athaliah, threw over the religious policy of his father and grandfather. Judah, like Israel, became infested with the idols of Phoenicia. Jehoram suffered, also, a number of serious losses. Edom revolted and gained her independence, and so did the city of Libnah.

After a reign of eight years, Jehoram of Judah died and left the throne to his son Ahaziah. It was the new king's misfortune to find himself in Israel at the time of Jehu's rebellion, and to meet his death at the hands of Jehu's followers.

In Jerusalem, the queen-mother, Athaliah, heard of her son's death, and resolved to seize the throne and reign herself over Judah. She achieved her end in the manner of a true daughter of Jezebel. "She destroyed all the seed royal," the chronicle records, murdering, in other words, her own grandchildren.

Thus a break occurred in the succession of the house of David. But Athaliah was not as thorough as she supposed. One of the sons of Ahaziah was saved. His name was Jehoash, the youngest of the princes, and still an infant. Together with his nurse, he was rescued by Jehosheba, a sister of King Ahaziah and wife of the high priest of the Temple. For six years the child

lived in the Temple with her and her husband Jehoiada.

Athaliah lost no time in strengthening the Phoenician idolatry to which she was deeply attached. For six years she had her way in Judah, no one daring to oppose her. She had her corps of Baal priests headed by a high priest named Mattan. She had her guard of soldiers who were stationed at the palace and Temple. But Jehoiada and his wife waited for the right moment,

ISHTAR AS THE GODDESS OF VEGETATION

Ishtar is the Babylonian and Assyrian equivalent of Ashtoreth or Astarte, the Phoenician goddess of fertility and love. Behind the seated figure of the goddess she is again shown standing. In both images ears of grain are growing out of her body. A bald-headed priest, behind whom stands a horn-headed goddess, is engaged in worship.

and, in the meantime, made friends of the officers of the guard.

On a certain Sabbath, he arranged that the entire guard, which was ordinarily divided between the Temple and palace, should find itself in the court of the Temple. He led forth the child Jehoash, placed a crown on his head and anointed him. The soldiers shouted "Long live the King!"

In her palace, the Queen heard the shouting and hur-

ried to the Temple. She took in the situation at a glance. "Treason, treason!" she cried. But she was quickly led away and slain. Her high priest also was slain, and her idols destroyed. The people hailed with joy the restoration of the house of David.

King Jehoash, who reigned from 837 to 798 B.C.E., fought against idol-worship in Judah, but he was unable to make the Temple the exclusive place for sacrifice, as the priests desired. The King gathered a large fund for the repair of the Temple, for it was now nearly 200 years old. But the people continued to bring sacrifices also to the "high places" and local shrines.

Like Jehu in Israel, Jehoash felt the heavy hand of Aram. Hazael, after defeating Jehu and winning a free road through Israel, led his army south and captured the city of Gath. He then prepared to strike at Jerusalem. Being in no condition to defend himself, Jehoash bribed the Aramean conqueror with the treasures which the palace and Temple had accumulated since the days of Jehoshaphat. Hazael departed but Judah had exposed her weakness.

The opening of the Eighth Century B.C.E. saw Judah as well as Israel reduced to the lowest ebb since the secession. In the south, the Edomites again raised their heads. In the craggy mountains below the Dead Sea they erected a strong fortress from which they defied their former masters. This was the city later called Joktheel, which is believed to have been on the site of the modern Petra.

King Jehoash, who, toward the end of his long reign, had, it appears, fallen out with the priests of the Temple, was assassinated by two of his attendants. He was followed by his son Amaziah who began by punishing his

father's assassins, sparing, however, their children. This act of mercy was contrary to the practice of the times. Amaziah was faithful to the Law of Moses which commanded that "the fathers shall not be put to death for the children nor the children be put to death for the fathers."

It was during the reign of Amaziah that the tide turned in favor of Judah. Amaziah defeated the Edomites in the Valley of Salt and captured their rocky fortress in the mountains. Again the road to the Red Sea was open to the merchants of Jerusalem.

But the heart of Amaziah was lifted up, and, as we saw (p. 160), he challenged his father's namesake, King Jehoash of Israel, with disastrous consequences to himself. Amaziah forfeited the regard of his people. The discontent grew, until, as the result of a conspiracy, the King had to flee from his capital. The conspirators pursued him to Lachish, where they assassinated him. Then, in 780 B.C.E., they placed on the throne his sixteen-year-old son Azariah, who is better known as Uzziah.

And with Uzziah a brighter period opens in the story of Judah.

§ 2. *After the Prosperous Reign of Uzziah, King Ahaz Becomes a Vassal of Assyria Whose Cult He Brings into Jerusalem.*

UZZIAH reigned over Judah for forty years, from 780 to 740 B.C.E., in prosperity and glory. He fought against the Philistines on the coast and against the Ammonites, and defeated them. He defeated also the Edomites and recaptured the port of Elath, thus extending the southern boundary of Judah to the Red Sea, where it had been in the days of David. With Israel, where Jeroboam II was equally successful, there was peace, for Uzziah was not disposed to court disaster by challenging his northern neighbor as his father had done.

In his last years Uzziah was stricken with leprosy and the real ruler was his son Jotham. Uzziah died, and after reigning for about five years after his father's death, Jotham also died and his son Ahaz came to the throne. It was during the reign of Ahaz that the final agony of the northern kingdom was in progress.

The youthful ruler found himself faced by a grave peril. Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus demanded that he join their alliance against Assyria, and, when Ahaz refused, they came down, devastated Judah, took many of the people captive and besieged Jerusalem. They wrested from Judah the port of Elath which they ceded to Edom, thus cutting off Judah from the sea. Their plan was to depose Ahaz and place on the throne of David someone who would be a willing tool in their hands.

Ahaz adopted the only course which seemed open to him. Against the advice of the prophet Isaiah, he sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser with costly gifts of gold

and silver from the treasures of the palace and the Temple. He stripped the Temple of its vessels and ornaments to please the Assyrian emperor. And his prayerful message was: "I am thy servant and thy son; come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram and out of the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me."

The Assyrians came, and again Jerusalem was saved, as it had been in the days of Asa when the Arameans had compelled Baasa of Israel to withdraw from Ramah. The death agony of the northern kingdom began, and ten years later Samaria fell into the hands of Sargon.

A Winged Human-headed Bull

This is one of the hybrid demons who are prominent in Assyrian mythology. Other demons were human-headed lions, like the Egyptian sphinx. These figures were set up before the gates of palaces and temples to guard the entrances.

The news of Samaria's fall threw a pall of sorrow and dread over Jerusalem. The people remembered that, after all, the Israelites of the north were their brothers. It was remembered how the captives of Judah whom Pekah had brought to Samaria had been freed and sent back to their homes. A "prophet of the Lord" named Obed had then arisen who had cried to the people of Samaria: "Send back the captives that ye have taken captive of your brethren, for the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you!" And the leaders of the people had compelled the soldiers to give up the captives and the spoil, and they had "clothed all that

were naked among them . . . and gave them to eat and to drink, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto their brethren." Now the pride of Ephraim was laid low and his lords and princes driven into exile, but was Ephraim not the son of Joseph and Joseph the brother of Judah?

Even greater, perhaps, than the sorrow, was the fear that fell upon Jerusalem, for who could say when the turn of Judah's capital would come? There was, however, no immediate danger. The pro-Assyrian policy of King Ahaz had vindicated itself. While the reliance of Israel on Egypt had proved a disastrous folly, Ahaz paid his tribute regularly, acknowledging himself a vassal of Assyria, and Jerusalem felt safe. But a feeling of dread lurked underneath, for Jerusalem's safety depended on the whim or policy of a ruthless conqueror.

In his servility to Assyria, the king of Judah went further than the paying of tribute. Still in the days of Tiglath-pileser, when that conqueror was punishing Aram and devastating Israel, Ahaz had gone up to Damascus, which the Assyrian had captured and made his headquarters, to pay homage to his suzerain. There he had become acquainted with the religion and worship of the Assyrians. Having no religious convictions of his own, and wishing to flatter his master, Ahaz had ordered his priest Uriah to set up an Assyrian altar in the Temple at Jerusalem in the place occupied by the brazen altar erected by Solomon. He introduced, also, the Assyrian worship of the heavenly bodies, and set up in the Temple the figures of horses which the Assyrians worshiped as symbols of their war god. The king of

Judah was false to the God of Moses and the prophets. He even went so far as to offer up his own son as a sacrifice to the Phoenician idol Moloch.

Other crimes and vices went hand in hand with the worship of idols. The princes and nobles of Jerusalem formed a powerful aristocracy, and sometimes had their way even against the King. They spent their lives in luxury and idleness, feasting, drinking and making merry. The women thought only of their ornaments, their jewels and their perfumes. All the social evils which Amos had denounced in Samaria flourished in Jerusalem. The rich magnates oppressed the artisans and peasants whose land and other property often fell into their possession. The judges favored the rich so that the poor were helpless. And false prophets arose who flattered the rich and powerful, fawning on them and telling

THE GOD ASSUR, CONQUEROR OF THE LOCUST

This enameled plaque was dedicated by an Assyrian king to the god Assur either to relieve him of a plague of locusts or for having already done so. The locust is pictured above the monarch's head. To the right of the god are the winged sun-disk, his symbol, the recumbent crescent, and the eight-pointed star, symbol of the goddess Ishtar. Assur's right hand is raised in greeting and in the left he holds his scepter and a chain of pearls.

them all was well and all would be well. Judah, too, was following the "normal" way of all the nations.

But Judah, no more than Israel, was to be permitted to travel this mean and vulgar road. The true prophet made his voice heard in Jerusalem even as he had done in Beth-el and Samaria. The story of Judah, thanks to that voice, becomes luminous and momentous. For the period we are now rehearsing is not to be known as the age of Ahaz or of his successor who sat on the throne of Judah. The period is to be known as the age of Isaiah, the greatest of the great prophets of Judah and Israel.

§ 3. *The Prophet and Statesman Isaiah, Champion of the Poor and Oppressed, Is the Dominant Figure of the Age.*

FOR forty years, from 740 B.C.E., when King Uzziah died, until the year 700 B.C.E., when, as we shall see, Jerusalem was saved as by a miracle from the Assyrians, the sublime voice of Isaiah, son of Amoz, was heard in the capital of Judah. Fortunately, a great deal of what he said and did has come down to us. In the book which goes by his name, the man stands out in all the strength and grandeur of his spirit.

Isaiah was not a mere sermonizer and moralist; he was an inspired statesman who left a deep impress on the tumultuous events of his day. Isaiah was no declaimer of sonorous but hollow rhetoric, he was no babbler of flowery phrases, vague and aloof from the lives of his hearers. What he said bore directly and unequivocally on the burning questions of the day, on the questions of international policy, of war and peace, of

religious reform, of the exploitation and oppression of the poor by the rich. Frequently his advice was sought by the monarch. Nor did his scathing eloquence spare the private vices and follies of his hearers, their greed and extravagance, their vanity and lust. Isaiah made perfectly clear what he meant and whom he meant.

Isaiah, however, was vastly more than a publicist who reacts to the problems of his times. The inspired vision of the prophet embraced not only the present, but the past and the future. The present was dark and cruel, the immediate future portentous and terrifying. But the faith of the prophet soared above the gloom and the terror. He saw radiant visions of the remote future, "the end of days," of the reign of the perfect king, and held them up to his hearers in strains of incomparable eloquence.

The call to prophecy came to Isaiah in the year of the death of King Uzziah, 740 B.C.E. The prophet has left a magnificent account of his sublime initiation. "In the year that King Uzziah died," he tells us, "I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne high and lifted up and His train filled the Temple." And he heard the seraphim call one to another:

> Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of Hosts;
> The whole earth is full of His glory.

And a great dread fell upon Isaiah, and he cried:

> Woe is me! for I am undone;
> Because I am a man of unclean lips,
> And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
> For mine eyes have seen the King,
> The LORD of hosts.

And when he had uttered those words, one of the angels took a glowing coal from the altar, and touched his mouth with it, and said:

> Lo, this hath touched thy lips;
> And thine iniquity is taken away,
> And thy sin expiated.

And Isaiah heard the voice of the LORD saying:

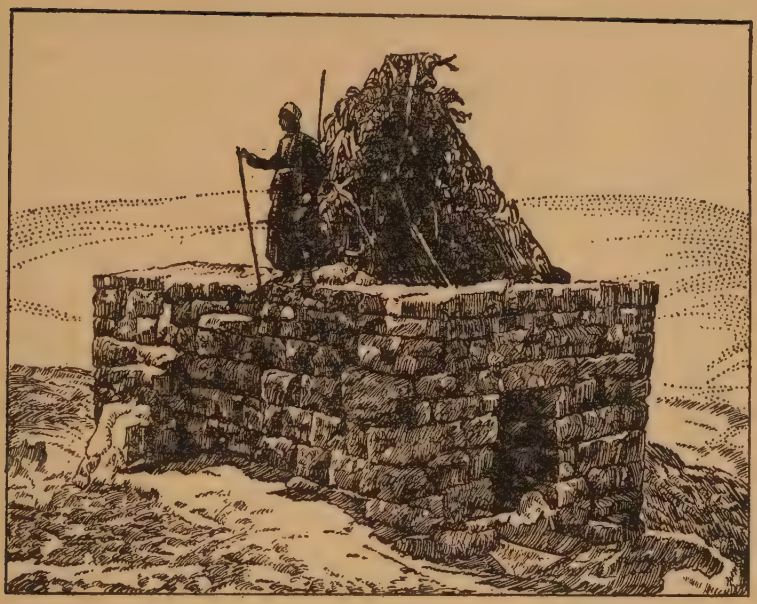
> Whom shall I send,
> And who will go for us?

And Isaiah answered and said: "Here am I; send me." And that was the manner in which Isaiah became a messenger and prophet to his people.

So Isaiah went down and addressed himself to all his people, to king and nobles, to workmen and peasants. Like Amos, he declaimed against the profligacy and cruelty of the rich, telling them God desires not their sacrifices and is weary of their feasts and solemn assemblies, for, "your hands are full of blood." And he cries:

> Wash you, make you clean,
> Put away the evil of your doings
> From before Mine eyes,
> Cease to do evil!
> Learn to do well!
> Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
> Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

In the manner typical of the prophets, Isaiah speaks in parables and propounds riddles in order to drive home his meaning. In his beautiful song beginning "Let me sing of my well-beloved, a song of my beloved touching his vineyard," the vineyard is Israel and God is He who "digged it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with



"And He Built a Tower in the Midst of It."
—*Isaiah* 5 [2].

This picture, drawn from a photograph, is of a watchtower, like those that were built in vineyards to guard against marauders. During the grape season the owner might make this tower his residence.

the choicest vine." But, alas! when He "looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes." Therefore shall the vineyard be trodden down and laid waste.

> For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,
> And the men of Judah the plant of His delight;
> And He looked for justice, but behold violence;
> For righteousness, but behold a cry!

It was the change which had come over Jerusalem, the change from the simple customs of the early days to the luxury and laxity which wealth and idolatry had introduced, that filled Isaiah with indignation and sor-

row. "Thy silver is become dross!" he cries to Jerusalem, and he goes on with a merciless arraignment, and he prophesies the "day of the LORD." That day shall be "cruel and full of wrath and fierce anger," when "they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed."

RIMMON OR HADAD, THE ASSYRIAN GOD OF THUNDER

He is also the god of storm and rain, and therefore of vegetation. He can be recognized by the three-forked lightning which he grasps in either hand. On his breast he seems to have the picture of a tower temple. He holds in leash two fabulous animals, the one in front being half lion and half eagle and known as the griffin. Compare this god with the Canaanite god of thunder (vol. 1, p. 201, illus.).

Isaiah's vision does not, however, end with punishment and desolation. Isaiah's "day of the LORD" is not only a day of doom, it is also a day of new birth and new life. All evil shall be uprooted, and "Zion shall be redeemed with justice." The scattered of Israel shall return "and they shall worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem."

> In that day shall the LORD of hosts be
> For a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty
> Unto the residue of His people.

It was in times of national crisis that Isaiah rose to the full stature of his great spirit. It is astonishing how this man, who saw Jerusalem as a nest of wickedness, who, in his wrath and sorrow, prophesied her doom, defied her enemies as soon as they came forward to threaten her. In times of danger it was Isaiah who displayed most courage and confidence. In times of general panic, he stood firm, hearten-

ing king and people, deriding their fears, and counselling implicit trust in God.

An occasion of this sort had arisen when Pekah, king of Israel and Rezin, king of Damascus, made war on Judah in order to compel her to join the general alliance against Assyria. The allies had come down and were besieging Jerusalem. King Ahaz and his people were moved with fear "as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind." It was a time of terrible distress for Judah, for the Edomites and Philistines, also, were invading her territory from the south and west.

One day, as the King was examining his defenses and inspecting the city's water-supply, Isaiah appeared before him. "Keep calm and be quiet," he told the King. "Fear not, neither let thy heart be faint, because of these two tails of smoking firebrands." With this mocking phrase, Isaiah characterized the dying strength of Aram and Israel. His message was: Faith. "If ye will not have faith," he declared, "surely ye shall not be established."

Isaiah was opposed to the King's policy of appealing to Assyria for help. He understood that the inevitable consequence would be the subjection of Judah to Assyria. But events ran their course; King Ahaz, in spite of Isaiah's counsel and warning, bent his neck to the Assyrian yoke and a new idolatry was introduced into Judah.

§ 4. *Another Great Prophet of the Age Is the Peasant Micah, Who Declaims against the Vices of the City.*

ISAIAH lived in the metropolis, mingling with the rulers and the nobles. He was a close observer of the game of international politics, and understood it better than the ruling classes. He was a man of broad knowledge and education, speaking in a language of polished elegance.

There was another prophet in his day, Micah of Moresheth, who spoke in the name of the villagers and the peasants. Himself a farmer living in a village near the Philistine border, Micah looked upon Jerusalem from afar, and hated it. Like his nomad ancestors of old, the simple peasant, living a life of austere piety, regarded the city as the home of idolatry, wickedness and oppression. He asks and answers:

> What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?
> And what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

The news of Samaria's downfall had a shattering effect on the peasant-prophet. He sees the storm approaching Judah and Jerusalem, and his spirit is shaken to the depths. There is something about him that recalls the early prophets of the days of Saul with their shouting and frenzies. He cries:

> For this will I wail and howl,
> I will go stripped and naked;
> I will make a wailing like the jackals
> For her wound is incurable;
> For it is come even into Judah;
> It reacheth unto the gates of my people, even to Jerusalem.

But the city deserves her doom. Micah's arraignment of Jerusalem is pitiless. Its judges and priests and prophets, the men who should stand guard over the moral health of the people, are false to their high calling.

> The heads thereof judge for reward,
> And the priests thereof teach for hire,
> And the prophets thereof divine for money.

And when he speaks of the rich oppressors, who spend sleepless nights devising evil, there may be heard in his denunciations all the rage and despair of the poor farmer who is at the mercy of the rich money-lender of the city.

> And they covet fields, and seize them;
> And houses, and take them away;
> Thus they oppress a man and his house,
> Even a man and his heritage.

With all this attachment to the ancient customs and faith, Micah, however, even like the other great prophets, sets little store by sacrifice. From time immemorial men had endeavored to appease the deity by the sacrifice of things they held precious: the choicest of their flocks and crops and even their first-born sons. Naturally, sacrifice came to be looked upon as an atonement for sin and wickedness, and even as a substitute for right conduct. It was, therefore, a tremendous step forward in the moral progress of mankind when the prophets of Israel made little of sacrifice, and even derided it. The God of Israel demanded something else. Man, according to Micah, asks:

> "Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,
> And bow myself before God on high?
> Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,

With calves of a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
With ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression?
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

And Micah gives an answer which reaches the loftiest heights of moral grandeur:

It hath been told thee, O man, what is good
And what the LORD doth require of thee:
Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly
with thy God.

The peasant-prophet denounced Jerusalem and foresaw her doom. His vision, however, is not lost in the darkness of despair. It glows with the light of hope and ultimate triumph. Nothing can destroy the prophet's faith in the ultimate victory of justice, for the cause of justice is the cause of God, and is it conceivable that God should suffer defeat? If the enemy has the upper hand, it is not for long.

Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy;
Though I am fallen, I shall rise;
Though I sit in darkness, the LORD is a light unto me.

And despite the evil days that have fallen on Israel and Judah, the captives shall be restored, and the nations shall acknowledge the God of Israel.

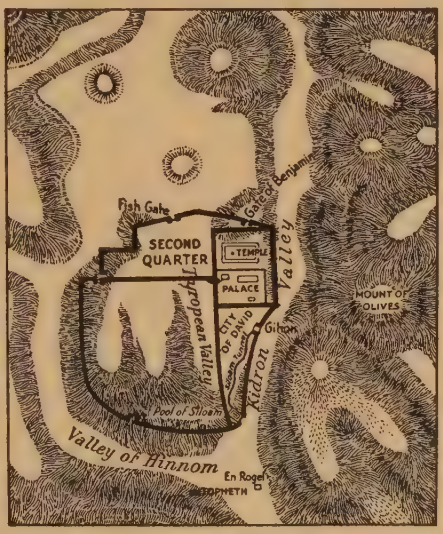
With all the differences between Micah of Moresheth and Isaiah of Jerusalem, between the farmer and the statesman, the simple peasant and the cultured man of the city, their basic ideas, their demands and aspirations, are the same. One spiritual impulse was at work in all the prophets of Israel.

§ 5. *The Young King Hezekiah, Spurred on by Isaiah, Begins His Reign with a Widespread Religious Reform.*

IN JERUSALEM, in the meantime, a new ruler had mounted the throne of David, and hopes for better days stirred in the hearts of the people. Hezekiah, the youthful son of Ahaz, was the new monarch, and among those who hailed the advent of his reign was the prophet Isaiah. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light," the prophet exclaimed. And of the young king he sang:

> A child is born unto us,
> A son is given unto us,
> And the government is upon his shoulder.

The policy upon which the young king embarked seemed to fulfill the high hopes of the prophet. For Hezekiah stood under Isaiah's influence, and he began by attempting to bring about a religious revolution. With the expulsion of idolatry and the establishment of the pure worship of the God of Israel, the social abuses which the prophets denounced would, they believed, inevitably disappear. For how could one be true to the God of Israel and practice injustice and oppression?



JERUSALEM IN THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH

Note "Hezekiah's Tunnel" from Gihon to the Pool of Siloam.

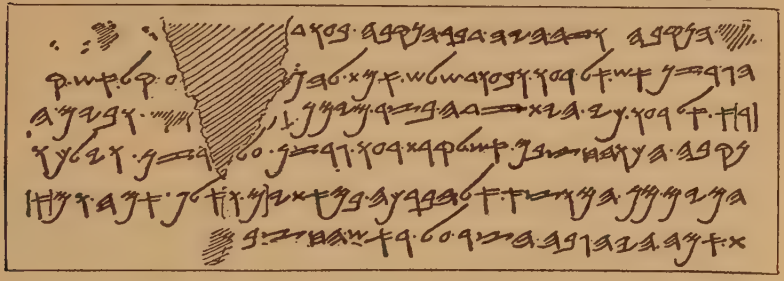
The program of religious reform of King Hezekiah set itself two aims. The first was to clean the land of the "high places," those nests of idolatry; the second was to make the Temple in Jerusalem the center of worship for all the people of the land.

The second aim was easier to accomplish than the first. To begin with, Jerusalem, now that Samaria was no longer her rival, gained considerably in prestige and importance. The city grew in population also, some of the northerners, no doubt, managing to find refuge within her walls. Hezekiah strengthened the fortifications and improved the water-supply by constructing a tunnel through which the water of the spring of Gihon was made to flow to a reservoir in the city. Moreover, the distance from any point in Judah to Jerusalem was so small as to present no serious obstacle to a journey for worship in the Temple. Hezekiah renovated and purified the sacred edifice. Urged on by the prophets, he removed from it various vestiges of idol-worship, among them the Brazen Serpent which had had its origin in Egypt.

A solemn festival of rededication took place with numerous sacrifices. The Levites sang psalms and played on instruments of music. The Temple became the national shrine, which, especially on the three pilgrimage festivals, was thronged with worshipers from every part of the land.

Nevertheless, the local shrines and altars with their pillars and Asheroth lingered on. The long-standing customs and habits of a people cannot be changed overnight, not even by the command of a king. In their first zeal, it is true, the people demolished many of the "high places," but before long they reappeared. Perhaps, with

all his pure and noble aims, Hezekiah was not a strong enough man. At any rate, the religious reformation was not as thorough as Isaiah had hoped it would be. Besides, when it came to the idols of the Assyrians which Hezekiah's father had brought in, could the King order them removed? Such an act would have been tantamount to a challenge to the Assyrian emperor whose overlordship Hezekiah was still compelled to recognize.



הנקבה • וזה • היה • דבר • הנקבה • בעוד
הגרזן • אש • אל • רעו • ובעוד • שלש • אמת • להכ קל • אש • ק
רא • אל • רעו • כי • הית • זדה • בצר • מימן ובים • ה
נקבה • הכו החצבם • אש • לקרת • רעו • גרזן • על • גרזן • ויל כו
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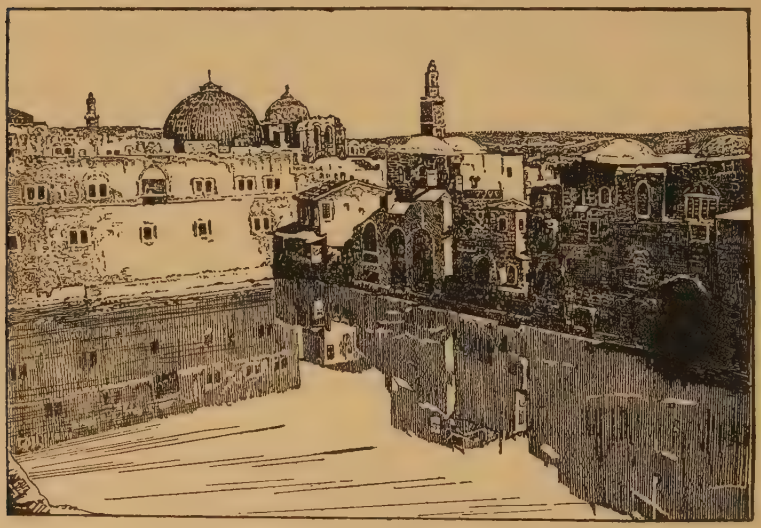
ת • אמה • היה • גבה • הצר • על • ראש • החצב(ם)

THE FAMOUS INSCRIPTION FOUND IN THE SILOAM AQUEDUCT ("HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL")

This inscription was found in the Siloam Tunnel in 1881 and is believed to date from the time of Hezekiah. The modern Hebrew equivalent of its ancient Hebrew characters, closely resembling the Phoenician (see p. 140), is given under it. The translation is as follows:

Line 1. ". . . the tunnel . . . And this is the history of the digging. When . . .
2. the pickaxes one against the other. And when there were only three cubits more to cut through, the men were heard
3. calling from one side to the other; (for) there was (a fault?) in the rock, on the right and on the left. And on the day of the
4. piercing the workmen struck each to meet the other, pickax against pickax. And there flowed
5. the waters from the spring to the pool for a space of 200 cubits. And (100)
6. cubits was the height over the head of the workmen."

The Passover that followed the purification of the Temple was a particularly impressive and joyous occasion. Hezekiah had issued a stirring call not only to the people of Judah but to the remnant that still remained in Israel to assemble in Jerusalem for the observance of the festival. "Ye children of Israel," he wrote to the people of Ephraim and Manasseh and Zebulun and the other tribes of the north, "turn back unto the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel,



THE "POOL OF HEZEKIAH" AT JERUSALEM

This pool is not far from the gate near the north-east corner of the city. There is a legend ascribing its construction to King Hezekiah. The pool is about 130 feet long and 100 feet wide.

that He may return to the remnant that are escaped of you out of the hand of the kings of Assyria." Many of the northerners heeded the call. A great multitude assembled in the capital of Judah. They began by demolishing the idolatrous altars that still remained, casting the débris into the valley of the Kidron. Then, for

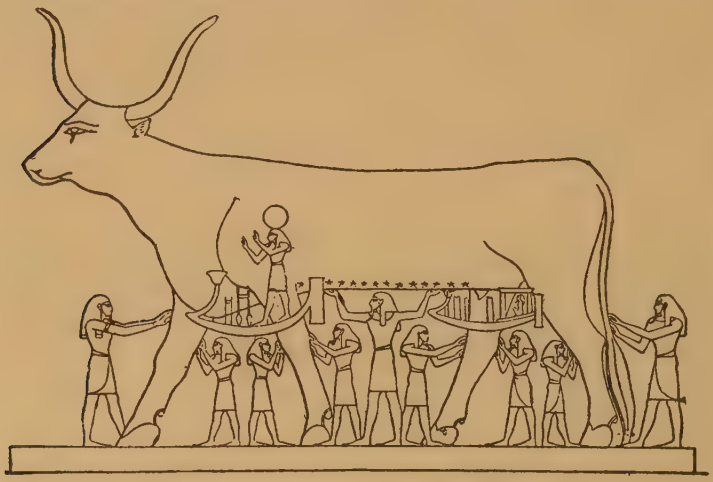
fourteen days, the Passover was observed with sacrifice, music and feasting. "So," the chronicle records, "there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem."

The reforming zeal of Hezekiah infected the princes and the people. The King reorganized the priesthood and the corps of Levites, and the people, in their new-found enthusiasm, brought an abundance of "corn, wine, oil and honey, and of all the increase of the field" for their maintenance. There was a deluge of gifts for the Temple.

In civil, as well as religious affairs, the government of Hezekiah was a well-knit and centralized organization. The King had his "scribe" and "recorder," and his elders or ministers, at the head of whom stood the steward of his household or majordomo, whose position resembled that of a prime minister. A certain Shebna occupied this position at the beginning of Hezekiah's reign. Shebna gained considerable influence over the King, but it was an influence that Isaiah found baneful. In his overweening arrogance, Shebna had a tomb hewed out for himself in the rock where the kings of Judah were buried. Isaiah called him "thou shame of thy lord's house." Eventually the prophet was successful in having him replaced by Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah.

Isaiah was particularly opposed to Shebna's foreign policy. The great game of war and intrigue between Egypt and Assyria never relaxed, and Shebna kept urging Hezekiah to rebel against Assyria and throw in his lot with Egypt. But Isaiah, who watched the game closely and understood it best, was convinced that it would be a disastrous folly to place reliance in Egypt.

True, in the reign of Ahaz, he had counselled against yielding to Assyria, but it had been done, and, now as then, Isaiah wanted Judah to have no hand in the dangerous and sordid business of international intrigue. The small nations were only pawns in Egypt's hands. She kept goading them on to rebel against Assyria,



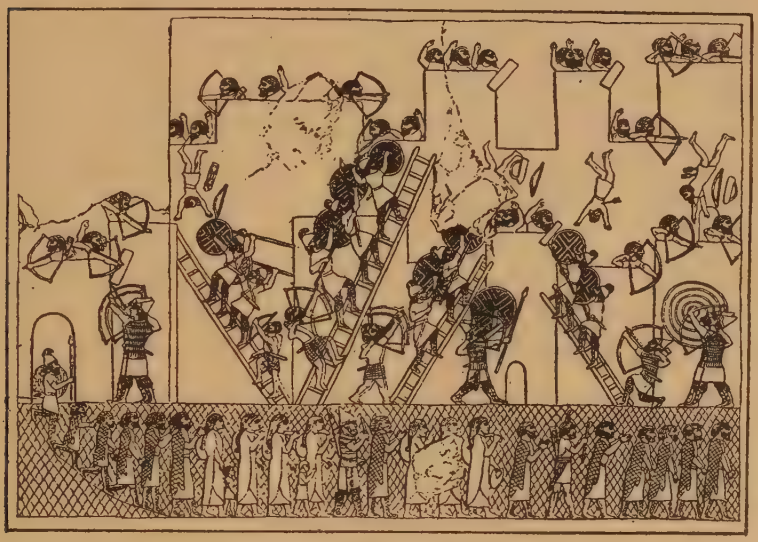
THE HEAVENS PICTURED AS A COW

This picture, of course, is Egyptian, for the Egyptians held the cow in peculiar veneration. Along the cow's abdomen are the stars, and at each end is a boat bearing gods. In the boat on the left stands the sun god Amon-Re (pron. *ray*) crowned by the sun-disk. Other gods are supporting the cow's legs.

promising them all manner of help. But Isaiah knew that all her promises were like the wind. She was willing enough to see the small nations enter between the paws of the lion, but she herself, besides being greatly enfeebled by internal disorders, preferred to "play safe."

The very year that Hezekiah ascended the throne, 720 B.C.E., the little nations round about were in a ferment of rebellion against Assyria. Among those who were drawn into the vortex was Hanno, the king of

Gaza. It was the year when Sargon came down again and planted a large colony of foreign settlers in Samaria. The young king of Judah resisted the temptation of joining the rebels, with the result that he was involved in a war with Hanno. Hezekiah was victorious. The chronicle records that "he smote the Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof."



ASSYRIANS STORMING A CITY

The walls of the city are being scaled by warriors with shields and spears while the archers are shooting their arrows at the defenders. The transfixed defenders are falling from the walls. Below is a procession of captives consisting of men, women and children.

Some ten years later, Hezekiah was again exposed to the same temptation. The Philistine city of Ashdod, egged on by Egypt, rebelled against Assyria. The pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem urged Hezekiah to do the same. Thereupon, the prophet Isaiah did a very strange thing. He appeared one day in the streets of Jerusalem, barefoot and almost naked, like a captive driven by the

Assyrians. And when people asked what it meant, he answered: "Like as Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt, young and old, naked and barefoot, to the shame of Egypt." Like the other prophets, Isaiah had the gift of dramatizing his ideas in order to drive them home with maximum effect.

It was fortunate for Hezekiah that he followed Isaiah's advice. For the Assyrians came down and captured Ashdod, and led the people away into captivity. But would the King continue to stand firm against the clamor of his ministers and princes, and resist the temptation to shake off the foreign yoke?

§ 6. *The Assyrian Emperor Sennacherib Sets Out to Take Jerusalem, but, even as Isaiah Foretells, He Meets with Disaster, and Judah Is Saved.*

THE time came, and it came soon enough, when Hezekiah yielded to the clamor and temptation. In 705 B.C.E., the invincible Sargon, who had ground to dust all the nations that defied him, was murdered in his palace, and all the vassal rulers from the Persian Gulf to the border of Egypt were seized with a new fever of hope and revolt. Ambassadors with proposals for alliances came to Jerusalem from the Philistines, from Ethiopia, from Egypt and even from distant Babylonia. For Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, whom Sargon had compelled to flee, now reappeared and defied the new Assyrian Emperor, Sargon's son Sennacherib.

It was probably at this time that, Hezekiah having recovered from a serious illness, Merodach-baladan sent

special envoys with gifts to congratulate the king of Judah. Hezekiah could not resist the temptation of showing the Babylonian ambassadors all his wealth and power. He "showed them his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold and the spices, and the precious oil and all the house of his armor . . . there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not." Isaiah was highly displeased over the vain display. He feared, no doubt, that Hezekiah was contemplating another international entanglement. The prophet came to the King and predicted that all his stores and treasures would one day be carried into Babylon, and that the same fate would befall his descendants.

MERODACH-BALADAN MAKING A GRANT TO ONE OF HIS NOBLES

A stela of this sort, which was used as a boundary stone, served as a record of a grant, usually of tax-exempt land, made by a king to his vassal. The figures at the top are symbols of various gods (Marduk, Ea, Ninhursag and Nebo) who stood guard over the inviolability of property, and in whose name the most fearful curses were invoked against those who might attempt to deprive the recipient of his land. The king is handing his vassal some object to symbolize the grant.

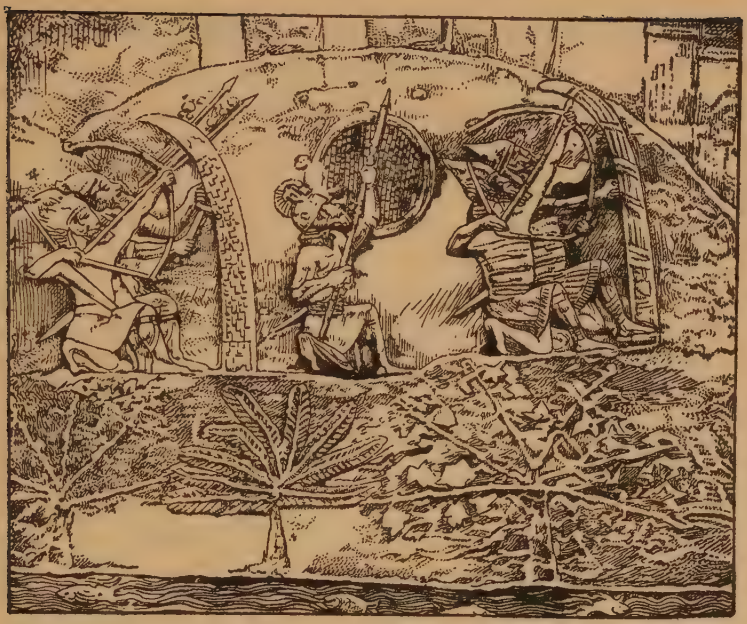
With all his might the prophet strove to prevent Judah from joining the revolt which Babylonia and other vassals of Sennacherib were preparing. What folly, he warned the rulers of Judah,

"to trust in the shadow of Egypt!" Denouncing the worldly intriguers, he cried:

> Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help,
> And rely on horses,
> And trust in chariots, because they are many,
> And in horsemen, because they are exceeding mighty;
> But they look not unto the Holy One of Israel,
> Neither seek they the LORD!

But this time the prayers and warnings of Isaiah remained unheeded. The court party, in which Shebna, the deposed steward of the palace, still exercised considerable influence, had its way with the monarch. Hezekiah stopped paying tribute to Assyria. His example was followed by the kings of Sidon and Ashkelon. The king of Ekron, whom Sargon had placed on the throne, chose to remain loyal to Assyria, but his people deposed him and sent him to Hezekiah who kept him a prisoner. Some of the other small nations adopted the cautious policy of waiting to see the mettle of the new Assyrian emperor before throwing in their lot with one side or the other.

Sennacherib lost no time in dealing with his rebels. He spent several years in overcoming the Babylonians and other enemies in the east. Merodach-baladan was again compelled to flee. In 701 he was ready to turn to the west. The Assyrian military monster again appeared in Syria. One after another the Phoenician cities were reduced. An Egyptian force attempted to stop the invader but was swept out of the way. Sennacherib continued south, and conquered Ekron and the other rebellious cities of the Philistines. Ambassadors from Edom, Moab, Ammon and other nations came to lay tribute at the feet of the conqueror.



ASSYRIANS ATTACKING THE WALLS OF A CITY

A moat or river runs at the foot of the wall, with trees growing on its banks. There is a wide gash in the wall, made, no doubt, by battering rams. Some of the soldiers with hammer and spear are trying to pierce through, while others, protected by tall shields, are shooting arrows at the defenders.

The nobles of Jerusalem alone thought they could hold out against the Assyrians. Perhaps they still trusted that Egypt would come up and help them, Egypt of whom Isaiah, with towering scorn, had said:

> They are not a help nor profit,
> But a shame, and also a reproach;
> For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose,
> Therefore have I called her
> Arrogancy that sitteth still.

Now Sennacherib turned to Judah, and the Assyrian hosts began to ascend to Jerusalem. The fortified cities that stood in the way were taken with little difficulty.

The conquerors took away many captives, ravaged the country and came nearer and nearer to the capital. At last Hezekiah was shaken out of his foolish confidence in Egypt and in the strength of his walls and towers.

A Mounted Assyrian Archer

His quiver is slung over his left shoulder, and he has a short sword on his left side. His chest is protected by a shirt of scaly armor. The rich trappings of his mount show him to be an officer of high rank.

The assurance of the princes and nobles was turned to dread and mourning.

Sennacherib himself has left an account of his exploits against Judah. His statements and figures are no

doubt considerably exaggerated. At all times, conquerors have been unable to resist the temptation of enlarging upon their victories and making light of their defeats. Sennacherib writes:

"As for Hezekiah of Judah, who has not submitted himself to my yoke, forty-six strong towns, fortresses, and smaller towns I besieged, I captured; 200,150 men,

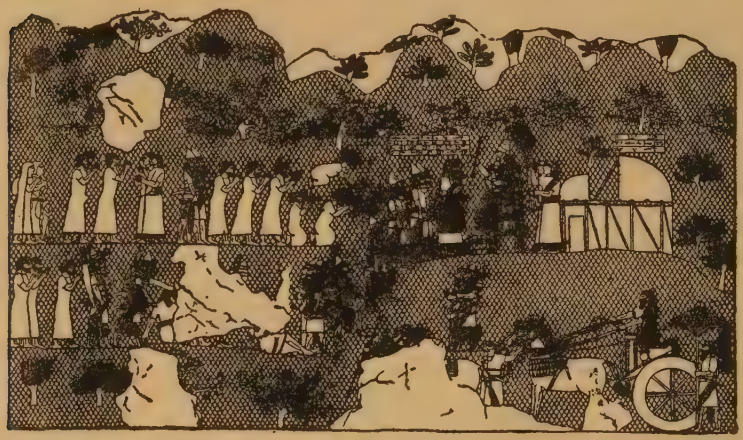
JUDEAN CAPTIVES AND BOOTY TAKEN BY THE ASSYRIANS

Above, two scribes, one writing with stylus on a clay tablet, the other writing with ink on papyrus, are recording the booty as it is being read off to them by the official at the left. The cattle is being driven off. Below women and children in ox-carts are going off into exile.

young and old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and flocks without number I brought forth from their midst, I reckoned as spoil. Himself like a bird in a cage in the midst of Jerusalem, his royal town, I shut . . . His towns which I had plundered I separated from his land, and gave them to Mitinti, king of

Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron and Zil-bel king of Gaza, and so diminished his land . . . Hezekiah himself the dread of the splendor of my rule overpowered."

From the "cage" in which he was shut, Hezekiah sent ambassadors to Sennacherib who was encamped before Lachish. "I have offended," ran the message of



SENNACHERIB ON HIS THRONE BEFORE THE CITY OF LACHISH

This alabaster plaque was excavated from the mound of Kuyunjik over ancient Nineveh. It shows Sennacherib seated on a throne (see illustration, p. 278) on a hill overlooking the conquered city. Two attendants are standing behind him. In front is a bare-headed minister rendering his report. Behind the minister are Assyrian warriors, and around the bend of the hill come more of them on foot and in chariots. Judean captives, some kneeling, their hands lifted in entreaty, are being brought before the monarch. The inscription over the minister's head reads as follows: "Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, seated himself upon a throne, while the captives of Lachish passed before him."

the King; "return from me; that which thou puttest on me will I bear." The Assyrian demanded a tribute of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. Hezekiah emptied the treasures of his palace and Temple, and was even compelled to strip the Temple

doors and pillars of their gold mountings in order to obtain the sum demanded.

Sennacherib took the gold and silver and then made another demand. He demanded the surrender of Jerusalem. Only if he held Jerusalem could he be sure that his rear would be safe in the campaign against Egypt on which he was about to embark.

The meaning of the Assyrian demand was clear. It meant that Jerusalem would suffer the same fate as Samaria. The people would be led away captive to a distant part of the Assyrian Empire, and the city colonized with strangers. Judah would follow Israel into exile and oblivion. It would be the end of the remnant, the end of the Jewish people.

The hosts of Assyria pressed forward and stood before Jerusalem. Three of the highest officers approached the walls and called for a parley. There came out to meet them three of Hezekiah's chief ministers including Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the steward of the palace. The diplomatic conversation that followed was long and ceremonious. The Assyrian spokesman was the Rab-shakeh or chief butler, apparently an official of very high rank. His manner was scornful and arrogant. Against the entreaties of Eliakim, he insisted on speaking in Hebrew, addressing himself, over the heads of Hezekiah's ambassadors, to the people who lined the walls. The haughty Assyrian shouted:

> "Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king: Let not Hezekiah beguile you, for he will not be able to deliver you; neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying: The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his

land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these countries that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"

SENNACHERIB SEATED ON HIS THRONE

This is a close-up from the alabaster relief on p. 276, where Sennacherib is shown before the conquered city of Lachish. The King is in a gracious mood and the Judean captives have reason to rejoice. He holds the two arrows with the points up, which means favor or pardon. If he held them points down, it would mean "no mercy." The signs are the same as the "thumbs up," or the "thumbs down" by which Roman spectators at gladiatorial combats expressed their disposition toward a fallen gladiator.

In the depth of his despair, Hezekiah turned for help and counsel to Isaiah. The prophet now rose to his greatest height. The Assyrians had defied the God of Israel. True, the LORD had chosen Assyria to be His instrument for punishing the wicked.

O Asshur, the rod of Mine anger,
In whose hand, as a staff, is Mine indignation!

But now the Assyrian ruler was saying:

"By the strength of my hand I have done it
And by my wisdom, for I am prudent."

And Isaiah, with withering irony, exclaims:

Should the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?
Shall the saw magnify itself against him that moveth it?

From Libnah, which the Assyrians were besieging after capturing Lachish, Sennacherib dispatched a second demand to Hezekiah in which he repeated his threats and taunts. The answer came from Isaiah:

The virgin daughter of Zion
Hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Hath shaken her head at thee.
Whom hast thou taunted and blasphemed?
And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice?
Yea, thou hast lifted up thine eyes on high,
Even against the Holy One of Israel.

And to the King and people of Jerusalem Isaiah declared:

Thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mound against it.*

THE PHARAOH TIRHAKAH

He belonged to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty and reigned over Egypt from 688 to 663 B.C.E. At the time of Sennacherib's invasion he was king of Cush or Ethiopia (the modern Nubia) only, but, it seems, commanded the Egyptian forces. His features, of distinct negroid type, prove that he was an Ethiopian.

Isaiah's faith was vindicated, his prophecy was fulfilled. Menaced by Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, Sennacherib was compelled to withdraw his troops from

* One of the operations in besieging a city was to build a mound or high embankment from which missiles could be cast into it.

Judah, and march into Lower Egypt to meet the new enemy. There his army met with an overwhelming disaster. It was pestilence rather than the sword of the enemy which destroyed it. Thus the event is chronicled in the Book of Isaiah:

> And the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria departed, and went, and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

Jerusalem was saved. A supreme crisis in the history of Israel was passed. The faith of Isaiah had triumphed.

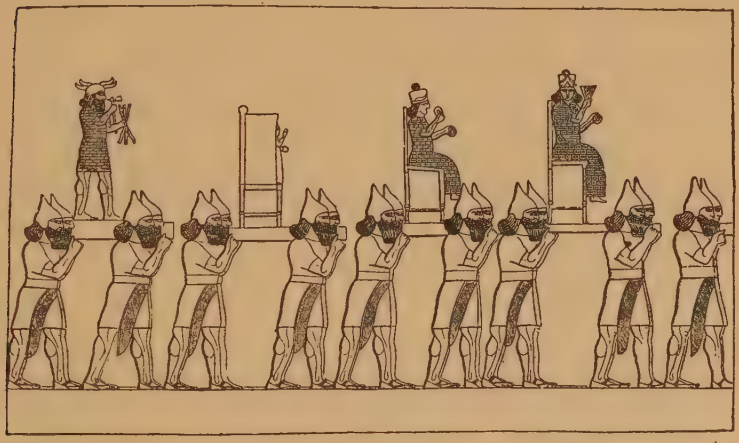
§ 7. *Amid Sorrow and Foreboding, Isaiah Is Upheld by His Faith in the Saving Remnant, the Perfect King or Messiah, and Universal Justice and Peace.*

IT WAS the year 700 B.C.E. when the hosts of Sennacherib were destroyed and Judah was saved. Eight years later, amid peace and prosperity, Hezekiah ended his reign. Naturally, the most influential man in Jerusalem was Isaiah, and the prophetic party was supreme.

The collapse of Sennacherib's campaign, however, could not have reassured Isaiah over the ultimate fate of Judah. Assyria was by no means at the end of her resources, nor was the horizon clear of still other enemies. Moreover, Isaiah was not deceived by his victory against idolatry. He knew how unstable his people were, how ingrained were the habits of idol-worship, how readily people succumb to the lure of luxury. He saw his opponents, the court party, constantly intriguing and biding their time.

Nevertheless, with all his stern and sober realism, with all his forebodings of disaster, Isaiah was also the prophet of the glorious future. Through the thick clouds of doom glowed his radiant vision of "the end of days." He never doubted the ultimate triumph of justice on this earth.

Three ideas, luminous with hope, recur in the sublime visions of Isaiah. These ideas and visions have become



A Procession of Gods Borne by Assyrian Soldiers

This appears to be a triumphal procession and the gods probably belong to conquered nations. The first two are female deities. The third is almost completely hidden. The fourth is a storm god with lightning in one hand and the battle-axe, signifying thunder, in the other (see vol. 1, p. 201, illustration). Note the long beards and locks of the Assyrian warriors.

part and parcel of the spiritual property of the Jewish people and of mankind in general. They have been like lamps on a dark and uncertain road.

The first is the idea of the remnant of the people which, no matter how great the ruin, is sure to be saved and restored in order to carry forward the people's life. To bring this idea forcefully to his hearers, Isaiah

named one of his sons "A Remnant-Shall-Return," just as, in order to warn them of impending calamity, he named another of his sons "Spoil-Speedeth-Prey-Hasteth."

Concerning the remnant Isaiah prophesied:

> And it shall come to pass in that day
> That the LORD will set His hand again the second time
> To recover the remnant of His people . . .
> And will assemble the dispersed of Israel
> And gather together the scattered of Judah
> From the four corners of the earth.

In that day, "the end of days," the God of Israel shall be worshiped by all the nations of the earth. He will teach them of His ways and they shall walk in His paths.

> For out of Zion shall go forth the Law
> And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

The second great vision of Isaiah, by which mankind is to-day, more than ever before, inspired, is his vision of everlasting peace among the nations. War shall become a lost and forgotten art. This also, shall come to pass in "the end of days." After the LORD has judged between the nations,

> They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
> And their spears into pruning-hooks;
> Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
> Neither shall they learn war any more.

Finally, Isaiah looked forward to the advent of the perfect king, the *Messiah,* or God's anointed. The Messiah idea was destined to capture the imagination of mankind, and play a foremost rôle in the later story of the Jewish people. Isaiah's vision of the righteous

ruler, who was to be a scion of the house of David, must have sprung from his early hopes in the young prince Hezekiah. But it became blended in his fancy with the millenial "end of days." The reign of this just and faithful monarch shall bring an end to strife and suffering. Even the wild beasts shall cease their ravening. "The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding." The poor and the weak shall have justice at last.

> With righteousness shall he judge the poor,
> And decide with equity for the weak of the land,
> And he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth,
> And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
> And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
> And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Thus, sustained by the lofty visions of the saving remnant, the ruler perfect in righteousness, and the reign of universal justice and peace in the "end of days," the spirit of Isaiah triumphed over the tribulations of the present and the uncertainties of the immediate future. With the death of Hezekiah, the sublime voice was heard no more. Isaiah may have died shortly before the King whom he censured and guided. And, with the passing of both men, the inevitable reaction, which Isaiah could not but foresee, raised its head in Jerusalem.

TOPIC ELEVEN: LITERATURE

A.

THE VISION OF

ISAIAH THE SON OF AMOZ

WHICH HE SAW CONCERNING

JUDAH AND JERUSALEM

IN THE DAYS OF

UZZIAH, JOTHAM, AHAZ AND HEZEKIAH

KINGS OF JUDAH

FOREWORD

1. The Consecration of the Prophet (6).

2. The Vineyard of the Lord (5^{1-24}; 3^{16-26}).

3. An Arraignment of Israel (9^{7-16}; 10^{1-4}; 5^{26-29}; 28^{1-4}).

4. The Iniquity of Jerusalem ($1^{2-17; 21-23}$; 31^{1-3}; $29^{9-10; 13-14}$).

5. Sennacherib's Blasphemy and Defeat (36; $37^{1-4; 21-38}$).

6. Proud Assyria Denounced ($10^{5-11; 13-19; 28-34}$).

7. "The End of Days" (2^{1-4}; 11^{1-12}).

FOREWORD ON ISAIAH

THE four decades of Isaiah's prophetic career (740–700 B.C.E) were years of stirring and decisive events for Israel and Judah. For Israel, the climax of those events was the final catastrophe, the downfall of the northern kingdom. For Judah, the climax was the failure of Sennacherib's attempt to mete out the same fate to Jerusalem as his predecessor Sargon had inflicted on Samaria. Those were years of turmoil and change, of internal violence and seething international intrigue. Israel, Judah and the neighboring small countries, always nursing the vain hope of obtaining effective help from Egypt, were unable to stop the devastating advance of Assyria.

The addresses of Isaiah must be read against the background of those events. With regard to those events, moreover, so far, at least, as they relate to Judah, Isaiah was not merely a spectator, but an active participant. In the war waged upon Ahaz by Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus, in the unceasing intrigues fomented by Egypt to embroil Judah with Assyria, and, above all, in the crisis of the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib, Isaiah played an important rôle. It was a rôle which was always true to his prophetic calling, for Isaiah the statesman was only another facet of Isaiah the prophet. His counsel and his deeds sprang from a wisdom, a courage, and a faith that were truly divine.

The words of Isaiah must be read also against the background of the social conditions prevailing in Judah, and particularly in Jerusalem. The prosperous reign of Uzziah had brought into the country, together with wealth, all the vices and social abuses which Amos had denounced in the kingdom of the north. Isaiah was no more tender with the profligacy and luxury of the magnates and fashionable ladies of Jerusalem. He was no less vehement in his denunciations of the oppressions of the poor by the rich.

As a poet, Isaiah ranks with the greatest of all times and places. The range of his vision is as wide as the universe, his images are amazingly varied and vivid, his words are stamped with dramatic concreteness and beauty. Amid the tumult of his times he stands before us a figure of regal splendor, combining the serenity of spiritual strength with a manner of perfect grace and incomparable force.

THE VISION OF

ISAIAH THE SON OF AMOZ

WHICH HE SAW CONCERNING
JUDAH AND JERUSALEM
IN THE DAYS OF
UZZIAH, JOTHAM, AHAZ AND HEZEKIAH
KINGS OF JUDAH [1]

1. THE CONSECRATION OF THE PROPHET

(ISAIAH * 6)

KING UZZIAH died in 740 B.C.E. *after a splendid reign of forty years. His death, no doubt, inspired anxious feelings in the hearts of many Judeans. Internally there*

[1] This is the opening verse of the Book of Isaiah and serves as the title to the Book.

* The Book of Isaiah, according to most scholars, contains the prophecies not of one man but of two. The first is Isaiah the son of Amoz who prophesied "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." The name of the second is unknown. He has been called the Great Unknown or the Second Isaiah, or Deutero-Isaiah. He prophesied toward the end of the Babylonian Captivity and will be discussed in Volume 3.

Here we are concerned only with that portion of the Book of Isaiah which is believed to contain, in the main, the prophecies of Isaiah the son of Amoz. That portion consists of the first thirty-nine chapters of the Book. The Book itself is the first of the *Nebiim Achronim* or Latter Prophets, and the first, also, of the three so-called Major Prophets, the other two being Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

But even the thirty-nine chapters generally assigned to Isaiah, the son of Amoz, do not make up a well-knit and coherent book. They should be regarded, rather, as a collection of orations, odes and rhapsodies, of im-

were serious weaknesses, while from the far north the menace of Assyria was coming nearer. It was at that moment that Isaiah, then still a young man, heard the divine call. The account of his initiation, which follows, produces the effect of a prologue to a vast drama or the opening strains of a mighty symphony.

THE VISION

IN THE year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple.[2] Above Him stood the seraphim; each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one called unto another, and said:

> Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts;
> The whole earth is full of His glory.

And the posts of the door were moved at the voice of them that called, and the house was filled with smoke.[3] Then said I:

mense variety in tone and style, a variety that should be expected from a highly gifted and versatile personality. Frequently, the promise of salvation follows fast upon a pronouncement of doom. Millennial visions are followed by denunciations of idolatry and social corruption. Even a narrative, repeated practically verbatim from 2 Kings, is also introduced into the Book. This diversity, however, does not at all detract from the power and beauty of *Isaiah.*

Chapters 13 to 23 differ from the rest in that they present a certain unity. They consist in the main of a series of judgments pronounced upon the nations, including Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Edom, Aram, Israel, Ethiopia, Egypt and Tyre. Thomas K. Cheyne, who ranks foremost among the Isaianic scholars, has called these ten chapters "The Book of Judgments."

The selections from *Isaiah* given in this OUTLINE are designed to bring out the high spots in the career of the prophet, as well as his leading ideas and doctrines. In addition, of course, they reveal the power of Isaiah as master of language and sublime poet.

[2] The young prophet saw this vision of God's glory in the Temple at Jerusalem whither he had gone to worship.

[3] Smoke is a sign of God's anger, in this case against the wickedness of the people as described below.

Woe is me! for I am undone;
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of
unclean lips;
For mine eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts.

THE CONSECRATION

Then flew unto me one of the seraphim, with a glowing stone [4] in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he touched my mouth with it, and said:

Lo, this hath touched thy lips;
And thine iniquity is taken away,
And thy sin expiated.

And I heard the voice of the LORD, saying:
Whom shall I send,
And who will go for us? [5]
Then I said: "Here am I; send me."

THE MESSAGE

And He said: "Go, and tell this people:

Hear ye indeed, but understand not;
And see ye indeed, but perceive not.[6]
Make the heart of this people fat,
And make their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
Lest they, seeing with their eyes,
And hearing with their ears,
And understanding with their heart,
Return, and be healed." [7]

[4] Stones were heated and used for baking bread, etc.

[5] "Us" includes God and his heavenly attendants.

[6] These two lines and the seven that follow, are, of course, in a vein of bitter irony.

[7] These bitter words echo the prophet's disappointment with his people who rejected his message. This account of his divine initiation Isaiah must have written down after he had had his experiences with his people.

THE DOOM DECREED

Then said I: "LORD, how long?" [8] And He answered:

"Until cities be waste without inhabitant,
And houses without man,
And the land become utterly waste,
And the LORD have removed men far away,
And the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land.

And if there be yet a tenth in it, it shall be eaten up;
As a terebinth, and as an oak whose stock remaineth,
When they cast their leaves;
So the holy seed shall be the stock thereof." [9]

2. THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD

(ISAIAH 5^{1-24}; 3^{16-26})

THIS parable of the vineyard, followed by a terrific denunciation of the vices of his people, and announcing the approach of the foe, Isaiah is believed to have uttered at the very beginning of his prophetic career. Like Amos in his arraignment of the nations (see p. 219), Isaiah introduces his message in a manner calculated to capture the sympathetic interest of his hearers, and then, with overwhelming force, applies the apparently innocent introduction against them.

LET me sing of my well beloved,[10]
A song of my beloved touching his vineyard.

A VINEYARD OF EVIL FRUIT

My well-beloved had a vineyard
In a very fruitful hill;
And he digged it, and cleared it of stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine,

[8] *i.e.*, how long must I continue my futile task with this people?

[9] This "stock" or stump, which remains after the storms have stripped the tree bare, is the symbol of "the remnant" that shall be saved, one of Isaiah's basic articles of faith.

[10] *i.e.*, my dear friend.

And built a tower in the midst of it,[11]
And also hewed out a vat therein;
And he looked that it should bring forth grapes,
And it brought forth wild grapes.[12]

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge, I pray you, betwixt me[13] and my vineyard.
What could have been done more to my vineyard,
That I have not done in it?
Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes,
Brought it forth wild grapes?

IT SHALL BE LAID WASTE

And now come, I will tell you
What I will do to my vineyard:
I will take away the hedge thereof,
And it shall be eaten up;
I will break down the fence thereof,
And it shall be trodden down;
And I will lay it waste:
It shall not be pruned nor hoed,
But there shall come up briers and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
That they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah the plant of His delight;
And He looked for justice, but behold violence;
For righteousness, but behold a cry.[14]

[11] The tower was for the watchman who guarded the vineyard (see illustration, p. 257).

[12] Wild grapes are sour and of no use.

[13] Isaiah passes suddenly to the first person. He now speaks in the name of the Lord, his "well-beloved." He begins to bring the parable home.

[14] The Hebrew word for "righteousness" is *zedakah,* for "cry" is *ze'akah.* The effect is heightened by this play on words. The cry comes from the poor victims to whom justice is denied.

WICKED LAND MONOPOLISTS

Woe unto them[15] that join house to house,
That lay field to field,[16]
Till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell
Alone in the midst of the land!
In mine ears said the LORD of hosts:
Of a truth many houses shall be desolate,
Even great and fair, without inhabitant.
For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath,
And the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah.[17]

PUNISHMENT OF THE PROFLIGATES

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning,
That they may follow strong drink;
That tarry late into the night,
Till wine inflame them!
And the harp and the psaltery, the tabret and the pipe,
And wine, are in their feasts;
But they regard not the work of the LORD,
Neither have they considered the operation of His hands.
Therefore My people are gone into captivity,
For want of knowledge;
And their honourable men are famished,
And their multitude are parched with thirst.
Therefore the nether-world hath enlarged her desire,
And opened her mouth without measure;
And down goeth their glory, and their tumult, and their uproar,
And he that rejoiceth among them.
And man is bowed down,
And man is humbled,
And the eyes of the lofty are humbled;
But the LORD of hosts is exalted through justice,
And God the Holy One is sanctified through righteousness.

[15] Now comes the tremendous indictment. It consists of a series of paragraphs beginning with the words "Woe unto them," in each one of which a particular form of iniquity is denounced. Those are the "wild grapes" that have grown up in "the LORD's vineyard."

[16] This, of course, is directed against the "land-grabbers" to whom the poor peasants were compelled to forfeit their holdings (see p. 187).

[17] The *bath* was equivalent to about eight gallons; the *homer* to about eleven bushels, and the *ephah* to one bushel.

Then shall the lambs feed as in their pasture,[18]
And the waste places of the fat ones shall wanderers eat.

THE SCOFFERS

Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity,
And sin as it were with a cart rope,[19]
That say: "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work,
That we may see it;
And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come,
That we may know it!"

THE SOPHISTS

Woe unto them that call evil good,
And good evil;
That change darkness into light,
And light into darkness;
That change bitter into sweet,
And sweet into bitter!

THE SELF-CONFIDENT

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes,
And prudent in their own sight!

THE DRUNKARDS AND THEIR DOOM

Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine,
And men of strength to mingle strong drink;
That justify the wicked for a reward,
And take away the righteousness of the righteous from him![20]

[18] *i.e.*, the estates of the profligate magnates shall become waste grazing-land.

[19] *i.e.*, who draw upon themselves *the consequences* of iniquity and sin by uttering the words that follow. This denunciation is against the cynics who taunt the prophet, challenging the LORD to fulfill what he foretells. The meaning of the "cords" and "cart rope" is that these cynics display immense zeal in practicing their wickedness.

[20] *i.e.*, these hard, "heroic" drinkers, as judges, favor the wicked for a bribe, and deny justice to the righteous.

Therefore as the tongue of fire devoureth the stubble,
And as the chaff is consumed in the flame,
So their root shall be as rottenness,
And their blossom shall go up as dust;
Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts,
And contemned the word of the Holy One of Israel.

THE VAIN WOMEN

Moreover the LORD said:
Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,
And walk with stretched-forth necks
And wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing as they go,
And making a tinkling with their feet;[21]
Therefore the LORD will smite with a scab
The crown of the head of the daughters of Zion.

In that day the LORD will take away the bravery of their anklets, and the fillets, and the crescents; the pendants, and the bracelets, and the veils; the headtires, and the armlets, and the sashes, and the corselets, and the amulets; the rings, and the nose-jewels; the aprons, and the mantelets, and the cloaks, and the girdles; and the gauze robes, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the mantles.[22]

THEIR PUNISHMENT

And it shall come to pass that
Instead of sweet spices there shall be rottenness;
And instead of a girdle rags;
And instead of curled hair baldness;
And instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth;
Branding instead of beauty.[23]
Thy men shall fall by the sword,
And thy mighty in the war.
And her gates shall lament and mourn;
And utterly bereft she shall sit upon the ground.

[21] The tinkling came from the gold or silver ornaments they wore around their ankles.

[22] This enumeration of the jewels and other adornments worn by the fashionable ladies of Jerusalem gives us a vivid picture of the luxury which the prophets abominated.

[23] Captives were sometimes branded on the face and arms.

3. AN ARRAIGNMENT OF ISRAEL

(ISAIAH 9^{7-16}; 10^{1-4}; 5^{26-29}; 28^{1-4})

IT IS the inevitable fate of the prophet to suffer, for his words usually fall on deaf ears. Isaiah's advice to Ahaz to have no fear of Pekah and Rezin, and not to call upon Assyria for help was disregarded. His denunciations, no doubt, only irritated his smug and self-confident hearers; his predictions of doom were not taken seriously. For a number of years — for an entire decade, perhaps — the prophet seems to have withdrawn into silence. About the year 725 B.C.E. *however, his attention was drawn to events in the kingdom of the north. The death of Tiglath-pileser III had brought the anti-Assyrian party in Israel to the fore. Israel threw off the yoke of Assyria (see p. 210), but Isaiah foresaw the impending doom and delivered a crushing arraignment of Samaria's sins and follies.*

THE Lord sent a word into Jacob,
And it hath lighted upon Israel.[24]

PUNISHMENT OF THE PROUD

And all the people shall know,
Even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria,
That say in pride and in arrogancy of heart:
"The bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn stones;
The sycamores are cut down, but cedars will we put in their place."
Therefore the LORD doth set upon high the adversaries of Rezin against him,
And spur his enemies;
The Arameans on the east, and the Philistines on the west;[25]
And they devour Israel with open mouth.
For all this His anger is not turned away,
But His hand is stretched out still.

[24] The prophet speaks of the terrible "word" as of a thunderbolt.

[25] "The adversaries of Rezin" must refer to the Assyrians. The meaning apparently is that from the north and east Ephraim shall be attacked by the enemies of Aram, that is, Assyria, as well as by Aram herself.

THE "HEAD AND THE TAIL"

Yet the people turneth not unto Him that smiteth them,
Neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.
Therefore the LORD doth cut off from Israel head and tail,
Palm-branch and rush,[26] in one day.
The elder and the man of rank, he is the head;
And the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.
For they that lead this people cause them to err;
And they that are led of them are destroyed.
Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men,
Neither shall He have compassion on their fatherless and widows;
For every one is ungodly and an evil-doer,
And every mouth speaketh wantonness.
For all this His anger is not turned away,
But His hand is stretched out still.

THE OPPRESSORS OF THE WEAK

Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees,
And to the writers that write iniquity;[27]
To turn aside the needy from judgment,
And to take away the right of the poor of My people,
That widows may be their spoil,
And that they may make the fatherless their prey!
And what will ye do in the day of visitation,
And in the ruin which shall come from far?
To whom will ye flee for help?
And where will ye leave your glory?[28]
They can do nought except crouch under the captives,
And fall under the slain.
For all this His anger is not turned away,
But His hand is stretched out still.

THE MIGHTY FOE

And He will lift up an ensign to the nations[29] from far,
And will hiss unto them from the end of the earth;
And, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly;

[26] The palm-branch and rush represent respectively the high and the low.

[27] This must refer to the legislators whose laws favor the rich at the expense of the poor.

[28] *i.e.*, your possessions.

[29] "The nations" is apparently a collective term for the Assyrian empire to whom the LORD will signal ("lift up an ensign").

None shall be weary nor stumble among them;
None shall slumber nor sleep;
Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed,
Nor the latchet of their shoes be broken;
Whose arrows are sharp,
And all their bows bent;
Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint,
And their wheels[30] like a whirlwind;
Their roaring shall be like a lion,
They shall roar like young lions, yea, they shall roar,
And lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe,
And there shall be none to deliver.

THE GLORY THAT SHALL FADE

Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim,
And to the fading flower of his glorious beauty,
Which is on the head of the fat valley of them that are smitten down with wine![31]
Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one,[32]
As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction,
As a storm of mighty waters overflowing,
That casteth down to the earth with violence.
The crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim
Shall be trodden under foot;
And the fading flower of his glorious beauty,
Which is on the head of the fat valley,
Shall be as the first-ripe fig before the summer,
Which when one looketh upon it,
While it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.[33]

[30] *i.e.*, the wheels of their chariots.

[31] Samaria stood on a hill, it was "the head of the fat valley," or Ephraim's "crown of pride." The hill was adorned with beautiful gardens: it was Ephraim's "glorious beauty." But Ephraim is drunk and "smitten with wine," and his flower is "fading."

[32] Assyria, of course.

[33] The fig that ripened before the regular harvest was much sought after, and was snatched up and devoured as soon as it was seen. The simile apparently expresses Isaiah's conviction that Samaria would be speedily captured by the Assyrians who were coming down to besiege it.

4. THE INIQUITY OF JERUSALEM

(Isaiah $1^{2-17; 21-23}$; 31^{1-3}; $29^{9-10; 13-14}$)

THE zenith of Isaiah's career was the part he played during the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib. For many years prior to that event, his influence helped to keep Judah out of the anti-Assyrian conspiracies that were always being fomented by Egypt, the country Isaiah distrusted and despised. As Sennacherib's invasion came nearer, his pleas and denunciations grew stronger. Isaiah saw the folly of resisting Assyria by force. His people's strength, he believed, must be of the spirit. The Assyrian wave would sweep over Judah and recede; if, however, Judah possessed sufficient moral strength she would emerge from the crisis and resume her national life. But he saw corruption and social injustice rampant in Jerusalem; he saw the leaders, wavering and confused, still nursing the vain hope of help from Egypt; he saw the worship a mere lip service that relied on the Temple and sacrifice but had no purifying effect on conduct.

The oration that follows is one of the most magnificent in all prophetic literature.

A NATION REBELLIOUS AND SINFUL

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth,
For the Lord hath spoken:
Children I have reared, and brought up,
And they have rebelled against Me.
The ox knoweth his owner,
And the ass his master's crib;
But Israel doth not know,
My people doth not consider.

Ah sinful nation,
A people laden with iniquity,
A seed of evil-doers,
Children that deal corruptly;
They have forsaken the Lord,
They have contemned the Holy One of Israel,
They are turned away backward.

On what part will ye be yet stricken,
Seeing ye stray away more and more?
The whole head is sick,
And the whole heart faint;
From the sole of the foot even unto the head
There is no soundness in it;
But wounds, and bruises, and festering sores:
They have not been pressed, neither bound up,
Neither mollified with oil.

THE DEVASTATED LAND

Your country is desolate;[34]
Your cities are burned with fire;
Your land, strangers devour it in your presence,
And it is desolate, as overthrown by floods.
And the daughter of Zion[35] is left
As a booth in a vineyard,
As a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,
As a besieged city.
Except the LORD of hosts
Had left unto us a very small remnant,
We should have been as Sodom,
We should have been like unto Gomorrah.[36]

THE LORD WEARY OF SACRIFICES

Hear the word of the LORD,
Ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear unto the law of our God,
Ye people of Gomorrah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your
sacrifices unto Me?
Saith the LORD;
I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams,
And the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood
Of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
When ye come to appear before Me,
Who hath required this at your hand,

[34] The lines that follow must refer to the havoc wrought by Sennacherib when he invaded Judah in the reign of Hezekiah.

[35] "The daughter of Zion" stands for Jerusalem. Compare Amos' expression "the virgin of Israel" (see note 28, p. 226).

[36] Sodom and Gomorrah were the two cities that were completely destroyed for their utter wickedness (see vol. 1, p. 30).

To trample My courts?
Bring no more vain oblations;
It is an offering of abomination unto Me;
New moon and sabbath, the holding of
convocations —
I cannot endure iniquity along with the
solemn assembly.
Your new moons and your appointed seasons
My soul hateth;
They are a burden unto Me;
I am weary to bear them.[37]

And when ye spread forth your hands,[38]
I will hide Mine eyes from you;
Yea, when ye make many prayers,
I will not hear;
Your hands are full of blood.

THE LORD DESIRES JUSTICE

Wash you, make you clean,
Put away the evil of your doings
From before Mine eyes,
Cease to do evil;
Learn to do well;
Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

BUT JERUSALEM IS FULL OF CORRUPTION

How is the faithful city
Become a harlot!
She that was full of justice,
Righteousness lodged in her,
But now murderers.
Thy silver is become dross,
Thy wine mixed with water.
Thy princes are rebellious,
And companions of thieves;
Every one loveth bribes,
And followeth after rewards;
They judge not the fatherless,
Neither doth the cause of the widow come
unto them.

[37] Compare this denunciation of sacrifice with that of Amos (p. 227).
[38] In prayer, of course.

THE FOOLISH TRUST IN EGYPT

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help,
And rely on horses,
And trust in chariots, because they are many,
And in horsemen, because they are exceeding mighty;
But they look not unto the Holy One of Israel,
Neither seek the LORD!
Yet He also is wise,
And bringeth evil,
And doth not call back His words;
But will arise against the house of the evil-doers,
And against the help of them that work iniquity.
Now the Egyptians are men, and not God,
And their horses flesh, and not spirit;
So when the LORD shall stretch out His hand,
Both he that helpeth shall stumble, and he that is helped shall fall,[39]
And they all shall perish together.

PURBLIND PROPHETS

Stupefy yourselves, and be stupid!
Blind yourselves, and be blind![40]
Ye that are drunken, but not with wine,
That stagger, but not with strong drink.
For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep,
And hath closed your eyes;
The prophets, and your heads, the seers, hath He covered.

LIP-DEVOTION ONLY

And the Lord said: Forasmuch as this people draw near,
And with their mouth and with their lips do honour Me,
But have removed their heart far from Me,

[39] "He that helpeth" is, of course, Egypt; "he that is helped" is Judah.

[40] This is addressed to the people of Jerusalem, especially the leaders, whom the prophet ridicules as men who are blind and as though drunken in their iniquity and folly.

And their fear of Me is a commandment
of men learned by rote;[41]
Therefore, behold, I will again do a marvellous work among this people,
Even a marvellous work and a wonder;
And the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,
And the prudence of their prudent men shall be hid.

5. SENNACHERIB'S BLASPHEMY AND DEFEAT

(ISAIAH 36; 37 1-4; 21-38)

TOWARD the end of the prophetic utterances of Isaiah the son of Amoz, comes this dramatic account of the Assyrian invasion of Judah and siege of Jerusalem, and of the part played by the prophet during that crisis (see p. 278). The narrative may be, as some scholars believe, the work of some one other than Isaiah, but the stirring defiance hurled at the impious and arrogant Assyrian is certainly in the spirit and style of the great prophet.

NOW it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them.

And the king of Assyria sent Rab-shakeh[42] from Lachish[43] to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fullers' field.[44] Then came forth unto him Eliakim the son of

[41] "Fear of the LORD" is an expression which embraces religious principles and duties. Isaiah denounces those whose religious observances are a mere mechanical exercise.

[42] "Rab-shakeh" is believed by some scholars to be not a name but the title of a high dignitary, equivalent either to "commander-in-chief" or "chief cupbearer."

[43] Lachish was the most important Judean fortress between the coastal plain and the hill country. The invader had made this place his military headquarters.

[44] This was the same place where Isaiah had met King Ahaz some thirty-five years before and had told him not to be afraid of Pekah and Rezin (see p. 259 and map, p. 263).

Hilkiah, that was over the household,[45] and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder. And Rab-shakeh said unto them: "Say ye now to Hezekiah: Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria: What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? I said: It is but vain words;[46] for counsel and strength are for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? Behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it; so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust on him. But if thou say unto me: We trust in the LORD our God; is not that He, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem: Ye shall worship before this altar?[47] Now therefore, I pray thee, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.[48] How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain, even of the least of my master's servants? yet thou puttest thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen! And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? The LORD said unto me: Go up against this land, and destroy it."

Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rab-shakeh: "Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Aramean language, for we understand it; and speak not to us in the Jews' language,[49] in the ears of the people that are on the wall." But Rab-shakeh said: "Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall, to eat their own dung, and to drink their own water with you?"

Then Rab-shakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the

[45] He was the steward or major-domo, a position previously held by the pro-Egyptian Shebna whom Isaiah had compelled to relinquish it (see p. 267).

[46] The "vain words" must refer to Egypt's promises.

[47] This refers, of course, to Hezekiah's reformation (see p. 264 f.).

[48] Rab-shakeh means that Hezekiah is suffering from a fatal weakness in cavalry.

[49] The Aramean or Aramaic was already the language of trade and diplomacy in the lands of the east (see p. 133). The "Jews' language" is, of course, Hebrew.

Jews' language, and said: "Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king: Let not Hezekiah beguile you, for he will not be able to deliver you; neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying: The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah; for thus saith the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me, and come out to me;[50] and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.[51]

"Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying: The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad?[52] where are the gods of Sepharvaim?[52] and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"

But they held their peace, and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, saying: "Answer him not." Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, that was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent,[53] and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.

And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him: "Thus saith Hezekiah: This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of contumely; for the children

[50] To "come out" means to surrender.

[51] The Assyrian frankly states that it is Sennacherib's intention to exile them.

[52] All of these places, located north of Judah as far as the Euphrates River were conquered by Tiglath-pileser or Sargon.

[53] As a sign of grief and mourning, of course.

are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.[54] It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to taunt the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD thy God hath heard; wherefore make prayer for the remnant that is left."

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying: "Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Whereas thou hast prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, this is the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him:

THE PROPHET'S DEFIANCE

"The virgin daughter of Zion
Hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Hath shaken her head at thee.[55]
Whom hast thou taunted and blasphemed?
And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice?
Yea, thou hast lifted up thine eyes on high,
Even against the Holy One of Israel!

"By thy servants hast thou taunted the Lord,
And hast said: With the multitude of my chariots
Am I come up to the height of the mountains,
To the innermost parts of Lebanon;
And I have cut down the tall cedars thereof,
And the choice cypress-trees thereof;
And I have entered into his farthest height,
The forest of his fruitful field.
I have digged and drunk water,
And with the sole of my feet have I dried up
All the rivers of Egypt.

"Hast thou not heard?
Long ago I made it,
In ancient times I fashioned it;
Now have I brought it to pass,
Yea, it is done; that fortified cities
Should be laid waste into ruinous heaps.

[54] The meaning, of course, is: A great crisis is upon us, and we have no strength to meet it.

[55] In derision, of course.

Therefore their inhabitants were of small power,
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were as the grass of the field,
And as the green herb,
As the grass on the housetops,[56]
And as a field of corn before it is grown up.[57]

"But I know thy sitting down, and thy going out,
and thy coming in,
And thy raging against Me.
Because of thy raging against Me,
And for that thine uproar is come up into Mine ears,
Therefore will I put My hook in thy nose,
And My bridle in thy lips,
And I will turn thee back by the way
By which thou camest.

"And this shall be the sign unto thee:[58] ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself, and in the second year that which springeth of the same;[59] and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall escape; the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform this.

"Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mound against it.[60] By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the LORD. For I

[56] "Let them (that hate Zion) be as the grass upon the housetops,
Which withereth afore it springeth up"—*Psalms* 129 [6]
Eastern roofs are, as a rule, flat and covered with a thin layer of earth, where, in the spring, grass appears, only to wither quickly as soon as the dry hot summer sets in.

[57] *i.e.*, the boasts of Sennacherib were vain, because his victories were decreed by the LORD, in whose hands Sennacherib was only an instrument.

[58] This is now addressed to Hezekiah. The "sign," which is described, is to bear out the truthfulness of the prophecy.

[59] Because the invader had destroyed the crops.

[60] See p. 279, note.

will defend this city to save it, for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake."

And the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.[61] So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went, and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god,[62] that Adrammelech and Sarezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

6. PROUD ASSYRIA DENOUNCED

(ISAIAH 10 5-11; 13-19; 28-34)

THE source of Isaiah's serene confidence in face of the Assyrian menace is disclosed in the following passage. He sees Assyria as "the rod of the Lord's anger," a mere instrument to accomplish His purpose against the iniquitous nations. But Assyria, in her overweening arrogance, proclaims: "By the strength of my hand I have done it!", and impiously she shakes her hand at Jerusalem. Therefore, Assyria shall be hewn down like a forest that is being felled and stripped. It is quite possible that Isaiah pronounced this oration in order to remove the dread of Assyria that lingered in Judah even after Sennacherib's retreat. The passage offers an excellent example of the splendor of Isaiah's imagery.

O Asshur, the rod of Mine anger,
In whose hand as a staff is Mine indignation![63]

[61] The Greek historian Herodotus (484–425 B.C.E.) reports an Egyptian legend that Sennacherib was prevented from invading Egypt by a plague of field-mice, the animals in one night rendering his army useless by devouring the soldiers' bow-strings and shield-thongs.

[62] Nisroch is believed to be the Assyrian Nusku, the god of fire.

[63] *i.e.*, Assyria is the instrument by which I satisfy My anger against wicked nations.

ASSYRIA GOD'S MESSENGER

I do send him against an ungodly nation,
And against the people of My wrath [64] do I give him a charge,
To take the spoil, and to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

ASSYRIA'S BOASTING

Howbeit he meaneth not so,
Neither doth his heart think so;
But it is in his heart to destroy,
And to cut off nations not a few.
For he saith:
"Are not my princes [65] all of them kings?
Is not Calno as Carchemish?
Is not Hamath as Arpad?
Is not Samaria as Damascus? [66]
As my hand hath reached the kingdoms of the idols,
Whose graven images did exceed them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;
Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols,
So do to Jerusalem and her idols?

"By the strength of my hand I have done it,
And by my wisdom, for I am prudent;
In that I have removed the bounds of the peoples,[67]
And have robbed their treasures,
And have brought down as one mighty the inhabitants;
And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the peoples;
And as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken,
Have I gathered all the earth;
And there was none that moved the wing,
Or that opened the mouth, or chirped."

ASSYRIA'S CERTAIN PUNISHMENT

Should the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?

[64] *i.e.*, Judah.
[65] Governors placed in charge of conquered provinces.
[66] See note 52, p. 305.
[67] *i.e.*, I have abolished the frontiers.

Should the saw magnify itself against him that moveth it?
As if a rod should move them that lift it up,
Or as if a staff should lift up him that is not wood.

Therefore will the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
Send among his fat ones leanness;
And under his glory there shall be kindled
A burning like the burning of fire.
And the light of Israel [68] shall be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame;
And it shall burn and devour his thorns
And his briers in one day.
And the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field,
He will consume both soul and body;
And it shall be as when a sick man wasteth away.
And the remnant of the trees of his forest shall be few,
That a child may write them down.

ASSYRIA'S MIGHTY ADVANCE

He is come to Aiath,[69]
He is passed through Migron;
At Michmas he layeth up his baggage;
They are gone over the pass;
They have taken up their lodging at Geba;
Ramah trembleth;
Gibeath-shaul is fled.
Cry thou with a shrill voice, O daughter of Gallim!
Hearken, O Laish! O thou poor Anathoth!
Madmenah is in mad flight;
The inhabitants of Gebim flee to cover.
This very day shall he halt at Nob,
Shaking his hand at the mount of the daughter of Zion,
The hill of Jerusalem.

[68] "The light of Israel" is another designation for the LORD.

[69] The prophet enumerates the places north of Jerusalem through which he sees the Assyrian host advancing. It is likely that Sennacherib never took this line of march, because the passes through those mountains are not wide enough for a large force. It is much more likely that Sennacherib marched down the coast and penetrated into Judah by striking eastward. The prophet, however, by poetic license, constructs this line of march to render more vivid its irresistible character. Most of the places mentioned have been identified. See map p. 16.

ASSYRIA'S DOWNFALL

Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
Shall lop the boughs with terror;[70]
And the high ones of stature shall be hewn down,
And the lofty shall be laid low.
And He shall cut down the thickets of the forest
with iron,
And Lebanon[71] shall fall by a mighty one.[72]

7. "THE END OF DAYS"

(ISAIAH 2 1-4; 11 1-12)

IT WAS, perhaps, the marvelous deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib, an event which made Isaiah's influence paramount in Judah, that encouraged the prophet to indulge in his splendid millenial dreams. Isaiah, at any rate, more even than the other prophets, believed in a glorious, if distant, future. To symbolize the disastrous immediate future, he named one of his sons Maher-shallal-hash-baz, *meaning "Spoil speedeth, prey hasteth," but he named another of his sons* Shear-jashub, *which means "A remnant shall return."*

In the following selection all three of Isaiah's exalted millenial visions will be found: the vision of universal peace under the spiritual impulse of "the house of the God of Jacob"; the vision of the perfect ruler upon whom "the spirit of the Lord shall rest," followed by an ecstatic picture of all nature in peace ineffable; and the vision of "the scattered of Judah" returning from "the four corners of the earth."

The times in which Isaiah lived were harsh and cruel. The world he lived in lay in the clutches of a power that made cruelty one of its chief weapons of domination. In such a time the prophet's dream of universal peace is all the more remarkable.

THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

[70] The prophet speaks of the downfall of Assyria as of a mighty forest that is being felled.

[71] *i.e.*, the forests of Lebanon, especially the magnificent cedar forests.

[72] The mighty one is, of course, the LORD Himself.

ZION EXALTED

And it shall come to pass in the end of days,
That the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established as the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;[73]
And all nations shall flow unto it.
And many peoples shall go and say:
"Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
And He will teach us of His ways,
And we will walk in His paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

THE NATIONS AT PEACE

And He shall judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.[74]

THE RIGHTEOUS RULER

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,[75]
And a twig shall grow forth out of his roots.
And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD;
And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,
Neither decide after the hearing of his ears;
But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the land;

[73] Some regard these two lines as the prediction of an actual topographical change, others interpret them in the spiritual sense.

[74] These sixteen lines are repeated almost verbatim in Micah 4. Scholars have advanced many theories to account for this repetition. There seems good reason to believe, however, that the original author was Isaiah.

[75] *i.e.*, the house of David. Jesse was David's father. The "stock" is the stump or the trunk of the tree.

And he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

ALL NATURE AT PEACE

And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
And the cow and the bear shall feed;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp,
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den.
They shall not hurt nor destroy
In all My holy mountain;
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples,[76]
Unto him shall the nations seek;
And his resting-place shall be glorious.

THE GATHERING OF THE REMNANT

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the Lord will set His hand again the second time[77]
To recover the remnant of His people,
That shall remain from Assyria, and from Egypt,
And from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam,[78]
And from Shinar, and from Hamath,[79] and from the islands of the sea.
And He will set up an ensign for the nations,
And will assemble the dispersed of Israel,
And gather together the scattered of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.

[76] *i.e.*, as a signal to the nations.

[77] The first time must refer to the deliverance from Egypt.

[78] Pathros is upper Egypt, Cush is Ethiopia, Elam is southeast of Babylonia.

[79] Shinar stands for Babylonia, Hamath for Syria.

TOPIC ELEVEN: LITERATURE

B.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

That Came to

MICAH THE MORASHTITE

In the Days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
Kings of Judah

Which He Saw concerning
Samaria and Jerusalem

FOREWORD

1. The Doom of Samaria and Jerusalem (1^{1-9}).

2. Wicked Rulers and False Prophets (2^{1-3}; 3).

3. "What Doth the Lord Require of Thee?" (6^{1-8}).

FOREWORD ON MICAH

MICAH, the villager and peasant of Moresheth, and Isaiah, who moved in the highest circles of the metropolis, were contemporaries. That fact points to the conclusion that the spirit of prophecy in Israel and Judah was not confined to any one group or social class. In other words, prophecy was not an isolated phenomenon. It was rather a natural expression of the Jewish genius. There were, no doubt, schools of prophets in the days of Isaiah and Micah, as there were in those of Elijah and Samuel.

Micah's village was located near the Philistine city of Gath, in the foot-hills between the central range and the coastal plain, the region known as the Shephelah.[80] He must have been an actual eye-witness of the Assyrian invasions, able to look down upon the Assyrian hosts as they swept up and down the plain, and his descriptions possess a remarkable vividness. Ethically, this peasant stands on the highest level of prophecy. His answer to the question "What doth the LORD require of thee?" *namely*: "Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," represents the apex in the ethical and religious thought of mankind.

[80] The word means depression or plain.

THE WORD OF THE LORD THAT CAME TO

MICAH THE MORASHTITE

IN THE DAYS OF

JOTHAM, AHAZ, AND HEZEKIAH

KINGS OF JUDAH

WHICH HE SAW CONCERNING SAMARIA AND JERUSALEM [81]

1. THE DOOM OF SAMARIA AND JERUSALEM

(MICAH * 1 1-9)

OBSERVE how the prophet, after pronouncing the doom of Samaria and Jerusalem as a punishment for their wickedness, is overcome with sorrow, and utters his poignant lamentation beginning: "For this will I wail and howl." The prophet is not the stern judge alone: he also grieves for the woes of his people.

THE TERROR OF THE LORD

HEAR, ye peoples, all of you;
Hearken, O earth, and all that therein is;
And let the Lord God be witness against you,

[81] This title is identical with the opening verse of the Book of Micah.

* In the Hebrew scriptures, the little Book of Micah, consisting of seven chapters, appears as the sixth of The Twelve, the twelve being the so-called Minor Prophets (see p. 219, note on *Amos*). The first three chapters of *Micah* deal, in the main, with the Assyrian incursions and with the sins of Samaria and Jerusalem. In chapters 4 and 5 a change comes over "the vision of his dream." He sees deliverance and restoration and the fulfilment of millenial hopes after the manner of Isaiah in "the end of days." Chapters 6 and 7 are of mixed character, containing denunciations of wickedness, prayer for pardon, and, in chapter 6, the exalted answer to the question "What doth the Lord require of thee?"

The LORD from His holy temple.[82]
For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of His place,
And will come down, and tread upon the high places
of the earth.
And the mountains shall be molten under Him,
And the valleys shall be cleft,
As wax before the fire,
As waters that are poured down a steep place.[83]

THE IDOLATRY OF THE CAPITALS.

For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?
And what are the high places[84] of Judah? are they
not Jerusalem?[85]

Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the field,
A place for the planting of vineyards;
And I will pour down the stones thereof into the
valley,
And I will uncover the foundations thereof.
And all her graven images shall be beaten to pieces,
And all her hires[86] shall be burned with fire,
And all her idols will I lay desolate;
For of the hire of a harlot hath she gathered them,
And unto the hire of a harlot shall they return.[87]

[82] His dwelling-place in heaven.

[83] The picture is of God coming down to earth in a storm, a favorite theme of the prophets and psalmists. Compare Psalms 18^{8-16}, and the "Psalm of the Seven Thunders," p. 62.

[84] The "high places," where impure religious rites were practiced, were an abomination to the prophets, and were synonymous with sin.

[85] *i.e.*, the capital cities are the places where sin and crime are most rampant (see p. 260).

[86] The word "hires" is somewhat vague. It probably has reference to the offerings to the idols which the prophet describes as "the hire of a harlot," referring, in turn, to the impure rites practiced in the worship of the idols.

[87] *i.e.*, having been seized by the Assyrians, they shall return to other idols in another land.

THE PROPHET'S GRIEF

For this will I wail and howl,
I will go stripped[88] and naked;
I will make a wailing like the jackals,
And a mourning like the ostriches.[89]
For her wound is incurable;
For it is come even unto Judah;
It reacheth unto the gate of my people,[90] even to Jerusalem.

2. WICKED RULERS AND FALSE PROPHETS

(MICAH 2^{1-3}; 3)

MICAH, unlike Isaiah, is not concerned with political matters. His wrath is aroused by the social vices, above all, by the iniquities of the rich against the poor. Those are the sins for which Jerusalem shall be punished, just as, for the same sins, Amos had predicted the downfall of Samaria.

WOE to them that devise iniquity
And work evil upon their beds!
When the morning is light, they execute it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.

THE OPPRESSORS

And they covet fields,[91] and seize them;
And houses, and take them away;
Thus they oppress a man and his house,
Even a man and his heritage.[92]
Therefore thus saith the LORD:
Behold, against this family do I devise an evil,

[88] "Stripped" means barefoot, as a sign of mourning. Isaiah "walked naked and barefoot to be for three years a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia"—*Isaiah* 20^{3}.

[89] The ostrich utters a peculiarly lugubrious cry.

[90] The prophet calls Jerusalem "the gate of my people," the gate of a city being the center of its public life.

[91] Compare the Tenth Commandment (vol. 1, p. 127).

[92] See p. 261.

From which ye shall not remove your necks,
Neither shall ye walk upright;[93] for it shall be an evil time.

UNRIGHTEOUS RULERS

And I said:
Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob,
And rulers of the house of Israel:
Is it not for you to know justice?
Who hate the good, and love the evil;
Who rob their skin from off them,[94]
And their flesh from off their bones;
Who also eat the flesh of my people,
And flay their skin from off them,
And break their bones;
Yea, they chop them in pieces, as that which is in the pot,
And as flesh within the caldron.

Then shall they cry unto the LORD,
But He will not answer them;
Yea, He will hide His face from them at that time,
According as they have wrought evil in their doings.

SERVILE PROPHETS

Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people to err;
That cry: "Peace," when their teeth have any thing to bite;[95]
And whoso putteth not into their mouths,
They even prepare war against him:
Therefore it shall be night unto you, that ye shall have no vision;
And it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine;
And the sun shall go down upon the prophets,
And the day shall be black over them.
And the seers shall be put to shame, and the diviners confounded;
Yea, they shall all cover their upper lips;[96]
For there shall be no answer of God.

[93] The allusion is to the yoke which was placed on the neck of the captive.

[94] *i.e.*, the poor, whom they (the heads and rulers) should protect.

[95] *i.e.*, the false prophets assure peace to those who feed and bribe them.

[96] To show they must be silent.

THE TRUE PROPHET

But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the LORD,
And of justice, and of might,
To declare unto Jacob his transgression,
And to Israel his sin.[97]

THE IMMINENT PUNISHMENT

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob,
And rulers of the house of Israel,[98]
That abhor justice, and pervert all equity;
That build up Zion with blood,
And Jerusalem with iniquity.
The heads thereof judge for reward,
And the priests thereof teach for hire,
And the prophets thereof divine for money;
Yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say:
"Is not the LORD in the midst of us?
No evil shall come upon us"?

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps,
And the mountain of the house[99] as the high places of
a forest.

[97] *i.e.*, I am a true prophet because I have the courage to denounce the wicked.

[98] "Jacob" and "Israel" now mean Judah. The northern kingdom was no more.

[99] Where the Temple was built.

3. "WHAT DOTH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE?"

(MICAH 6[1-8])

SOME students of the religious development of Israel have called this chapter the most important in the Bible for the reason that it expresses more clearly and powerfully than any other the conception of God as an ethical Being. Not sacrifice but right living is the prophetic demand. The tenderness which Micah displays here is highly reminiscent of Hosea.

HEAR ye now what the LORD saith:
Arise, contend thou before the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice.[1]

GOD'S DEEDS FOR HIS PEOPLE

The prophet speaks:

"Hear, O ye mountains, the LORD's controversy,
And ye enduring rocks, the foundations of the earth;
For the LORD hath a controversy with His people,
And He will plead with Israel.

O My people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?
Testify against Me.
For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And redeemed thee out of the house of bondage,
And I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him;[2]
From Shittim unto Gilgal,[3]
That ye may know the righteous acts of the LORD."

[1] These words the LORD has addressed to the prophet, and the latter at once obeys. He pleads the LORD's case against Israel in the presence of the eternal mountains and rocks as witnesses, just as Isaiah had called heaven and earth to witness (Isaiah 1[2]).

[2] For all of these allusions, see vol. 1.

[3] Referring to the miracles during the crossing of the Jordan River.

DOTH THE LORD DESIRE SACRIFICE?

The people speak:

"Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,[4]
And bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings,
With calves of a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
With ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

JUSTICE, MERCY, AND HUMILITY

The prophet speaks:

"It hath been told thee, O man, what is good,
And what the LORD doth require of thee:[5]
Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly
with thy God."

[4] Now the people are understood as speaking, asking to know how they may please God. They, with their primitive religious notions, can think only in terms of ritual and sacrifice.

[5] Now comes Micah's momentous reply. God requires not sacrifices, but justice, mercy and humility. Micah's peculiar contribution is the notion of humility in the presence of God, or as he beautifully expresses it "to walk humbly with thy God."

TOPIC TWELVE

The Downfall of Judah

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The Downfall of Judah

§ 1. *During the Long Reign of Manasseh, Judah Remains Subject to Assyria, with Religious Reaction in Full Swing.*

§ 2. *As Assyria Begins Tottering to Her Fall, the Prophets Nahum and Zephaniah Are Heard in Judah.*

§ 3. *In the Early Years of Jeremiah's Prophetic Calling, the Good King Josiah Cleans the Land of Idolatry.*

§ 4. *The Fall of Assyria Brings Babylonia, Now Held by the Chaldeans, Again to the Fore, and in 597* B.C.E. *Comes the First Babylonian Captivity.*

§ 5. *The Prophet Jeremiah, Fearless, Passionate and Uncompromising, Stands Out as the Dominant Figure of the Period.*

§ 6. *In 586* B.C.E. *Jerusalem Is Taken and Destroyed by the Chaldeans, the Temple Burnt Down, and the People of Judah Led Away Captive to Babylonia.*

TOPIC TWELVE: LITERATURE

A. Jeremiah
   Foreword
   1. The Prophet Summoned (*Jeremiah* 1^{4-19}).
   2. The Prophet's Plea (*Jeremiah* 2^{1-19}; 3^{21-25}; 4^{1-2}).
   3. The Grievous Sins of the People (*Jeremiah* 5^{20-31}; $6^{13-14; 20}$; 8^{7}; 13^{23-25}).
   4. The Enemy from the North (*Jeremiah* $4^{5-9; 11-17; 19-28; 18}$).
   5. A Vision of Restoration (*Jeremiah* $31^{2-25; 27-36}$).
   6. The Prophet Denounces King Jehoiakim (*Jeremiah* 22^{13-19}).
   7. Parable of the Potter and the Clay (*Jeremiah* 18^{1-11}).
   8. The Foolish Trust in Temple and Sacrifice (*Jeremiah* 7).
   9. The Prophet Exults in Egypt's Defeat (*Jeremiah* 46^{1-12}).
   10. The Perfidy of the Slave Owners (*Jeremiah* 34^{8-22}).
   11. The Prophet Bewails His Destiny (*Jeremiah* $20^{7-10; 14-18}$).
   12. The Prophet in Despair for His People (*Jeremiah* 8^{18-23}).

B. A Dirge for Zion Overthrown
   (*Lamentations* $1^{1; 4; 6; 16}$; $2^{1; 6-15}$; $4^{1; 3-5; 9; 11}$; $5^{1-2; 15-21}$).

C. Zephaniah
   The Day of Wrath (*Zephaniah* $1^{7; 2-6; 8-18}$).

D. Nahum
   A Paean for the Downfall of Nineveh (*Nahum* 2; $3^{1-3; 12-13; 18-19}$).

TOPIC TWELVE

The Downfall of Judah

§ 1. *During the Long Reign of Manasseh, Judah Remains Subject to Assyria, with Religious Reaction in Full Swing.*

FROM the beginning of their career as a people, two conflicting tendencies have been at work among the children of Israel. One of them was set to the goal of making Israel a "peculiar" people, different and distinguished from all others. It was expressed in the promise, which was at the same time a command: "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." The second tendency, with which the first was always at war, was bent on making the children of Israel like the nations that surrounded them or in whose midst they lived.

At different periods, distinct parties arose in the nation, representing these tendencies. Naturally, the issue around which the struggle raged hottest was the question of religion, for it was chiefly their religion that distinguished the children of Israel from the other nations. There was no surer way of preserving Israel than by keeping him faithful to the God of Moses and His law. There was no surer way of confounding Israel with the other nations than by making him adopt their idolatrous worship.

In the reign of Hezekiah, the prophetic party, headed

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH IN THE TIME OF JEREMIAH

Outside the shaded borders, Jewish life had been practically crushed by the heavy hand of Assyria.

by Isaiah, stood for the first tendency. The second was represented by the court party, consisting of the princes and wealthy magnates, at whose head stood the minister Shebna, the man whom Isaiah called "thou shame of thy lord's house." The followers of Isaiah called themselves *Anavim,* meaning the poor, humble and pious. They regarded riches and luxury as the source of religious and social iniquity. They were zealous for the pure worship of the God of Moses, the God who protected the poor, the fatherless and the widow, the God who hated and punished wickedness and oppression. Their opponents, on the other hand, preferred Baal, Astarte and the gods of the Assyrians. They were attracted by the impure rites which attended the worship of those gods who, moreover, did not disturb them in their luxurious living and social wrongdoing.

During the greater part of the reign of Hezekiah the struggle between the two parties had continued. In the end, Isaiah had triumphed. The collapse of Sennacherib's campaign made the victory of the prophetic party complete.

The court party, however, bided its time, and, with the death of Hezekiah, came its opportunity. The new king was Hezekiah's twelve-year-old son Manasseh. The power fell into the hands of the princes and magnates who completely reversed the policy of the former king. All the gods of the surrounding nations, including those of Assyria, were brought into Jerusalem, and some of the idols were set up and worshiped in the court of the Temple itself. The local shrines reappeared on the "high places," together with all the foul practices of idolatry. The superstitions which Isaiah had denounced, such as

divination by witchcraft, raised their heads again, being favored by the King himself.

Finally, not even that supreme abomination of idolatry, human sacrifice, was omitted in the orgy of reaction that followed the reign of Hezekiah. In the Valley of Hinnom, which lay south of Jerusalem, an altar was raised to Moloch, the Phoenician demon who delighted in the charred bodies of little children. These children were made to pass through the flames, and the chronicle records that King Manasseh himself sacrificed his son to the loathsome idol.

A Babylonian-Assyrian Storm Demon

This is the demon of the south-east wind, who brought not only destruction, but disease. He is a hybrid figure with a human body, and the feet, claws, and wings of a bird. He stands ready to strike. Speaking of Babylon, Jeremiah (50 38) says: "It is a land of graven images, and they are mad upon things of horror."

The *Anavim* fell on evil days. The court party avenged itself on them to the full. The voice of the prophets was stifled. The few who braved the power of the court by denouncing the reactionaries were hunted down and slain. There is a legend that Isaiah himself was among those who suffered martyrdom. Their books were seized and destroyed. Those who escaped labored in secret to keep alive the teachings of the prophets, and waited for better days.

The reign of Manasseh lasted fifty-four years, from 692 to 638 B.C.E., and he remained throughout a vassal of Assyria. For, despite the disaster which had befallen Sennacherib, Assyria was far from being at the end of her resources.

Notwithstanding rebellions and palace revolutions, the far-flung empire welded together by Tiglath-pileser still held firm. It was a vast feudal state embracing the entire Orient, the mightiest that had yet appeared on earth. It were sheer madness for Manasseh to defy this colossus. Nevertheless, there were men in Judah who dreamed of independence. Like the anti-Assyrians of former generations, they looked toward

THE ASSYRIAN EMPEROR ESARHADDON TRIUMPHANT

This is a son of the famous Sennacherib and he reigned from 681 to 669 B.C.E. when Manasseh was reigning in Judah. Of the two captives, with cords through their lips, the one who is standing is believed to be Absimilkutti of Sidon, the other, who is kneeling, Ushanahuru, a son of Tirhakah of Ethiopia.

Egypt, hoping that the armies of the Pharaoh would deliver them from the foreign yoke.

In the meantime, the Assyrian horsemen and archers swept on to new victories and Egypt herself was conquered. After his return to Nineveh, Sennacherib waged many campaigns against the Babylonians, the Elamites and other nations. He defeated his enemy Merodach-baladan, and in 689 B.C.E. he captured Babylon and razed the city to the ground. Eight years later he was murdered by two of his sons. A third son, named Esarhaddon, came to the throne of the Empire. The new ruler restored Babylon and then resumed the struggle with Egypt which his father had been compelled to abandon. In 671 B.C.E. the Assyrians captured Memphis. Five years later, Esarhaddon's son, Ashurbanipal, put down a rebellion in Egypt and captured the city of Thebes.

On his way to Egypt, Esarhaddon is reported to have taken Manasseh captive and to have exiled him to Babylon. Perhaps Manasseh was showing signs of impatience with the yoke of Assyria. It may be he expected Egypt to come out the victor in the duel between the two giants. But having satisfied the Assyrian that he had no thought of rebelling, the Judean monarch was allowed to return to his own country.

Manasseh's death was followed by a revolution, instigated, in all likelihood, by the anti-Assyrian party. Amon, Manasseh's son, was on the throne for little more than a year when he was assassinated by some of his own servants. But the revolution failed. The people had little desire to embark upon an anti-Assyrian policy. They punished the slayers, and made Amon's son Josiah, then only eight years old, king of Judah.

Throughout the years of Josiah's minority, the court

party continued in power, and idolatry flourished. But, in the great world outside, changes of far-reaching importance were in progress, while the voice of the prophet, so long suppressed, again made itself heard in Judah.

§ 2. *As Assyria Begins Tottering to Her Fall, the Prophets Nahum and Zephaniah Are Heard in Judah.*

SHORTLY after the conquest of Egypt by Assyria, the signs began to multiply that the mighty giant who had been trampling on the nations was tottering to his fall. Esarhaddon's successor, after putting down a rebellion in Egypt, was compelled to attend to enemies nearer home, and only ten years after her conquest, Egypt was again independent. Babylon, the ancient rival of Nineveh, had risen from her ruins to new power. The Elamites had to be put down again, and the Assyrians captured and destroyed Susa, their capital. But from the mountains and forests of the north, new hordes came and threw themselves upon Assyria. They were the Cimmerians and Scythians, savage, hard-riding horsemen of Mongol origin. From the east came the Medes; and the Chaldeans were pushing up from the south, penetrating the Plain of Shinar and menacing Babylon. Again the fertile Land of the Two Rivers was luring the inhabitants of the hot deserts and bleak uplands.

Like a lion at bay, surrounded by enemies on all sides, Assyria was fighting for her life. But her strength was ebbing away. Ceaseless warfare had decimated her fighting men, and the empty ranks could no longer be filled by men drafted from foreign nations. Her wealth, too, was exhausted. Having lived on plunder, the Assyrian

emperors had taken no pains to develop resources of their own. The doom of Assyria was fast approaching.

The wild Scythian horsemen had swept across the borders and were galloping over the Mediterranean provinces. They even rode down the coastal plain to the border of Egypt, and were bought off by the frightened Pharaoh. The Medes and Babylonians were preparing to strike from the south.

In Judah, the voice of the prophet Nahum rises up in a passionate song of triumph, for wicked Nineveh, "the bloody city, full of lies and rapine," is about to be overwhelmed. He begins with an exalted picture of God's omnipotence:

> The mountains quake at Him,
> And the hills melt;
> And the earth is upheaved at His presence,
> Yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

He bids his country rejoice,

> For the wicked shall no more pass through thee;
> He is utterly cut off.

With astonishing vividness and a power of picturization that would be difficult to match, Nahum sees the enemies of Assyria bring the final disgrace upon her, and their armed forces ravening through her streets and palaces.

> The chariots rush madly in the streets,
> They jostle one against another in the broad places;
> The appearance of them is like torches,
> They run to and fro like the lightnings.
> Hark! the whip, and hark! the rattling of wheels;
> And prancing horses, and bounding chariots;
> The horsemen charging,
> And the flashing sword, and the glittering spear.

The downfall of Assyria, declares the prophet, is sure to make all men rejoice, "for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?"

The words of another prophet of about the same period have come down to us, who foretells not only the doom of Assyria but of Jerusalem as well. They are the sombre and fiery words of Zephaniah son of Cushi, who sees the "day of the Lord" approaching, when the great shall be laid low, and

> Their wealth shall become a booty,
> And their houses a desolation.

Zephaniah appears to have been a resident of Jerusalem, and of noble, perhaps even royal, descent. While the Book of Nahum consists only of a song of triumph against Assyria, Zephaniah's utterings are in the line of the prophets of the previous century. He denounces the idolatry and corruption of Jerusalem, and foretells her downfall, as well as the overthrow of the Philistines, the Moabites, the Assyrians and other nations. Zephaniah is believed to have witnessed the invasion of the Scythians in the early years of Josiah's reign. The prophet sees these savage hordes as the instrument of God. He sees the "day of the Lord" as "a day of trouble and distress,"

> A day of the horn and alarm,
> Against the fortified cities, and against the high towers.

But, like the prophets of the previous century, Zephaniah ends with a vision of eventual restoration. The dispersed of Israel shall be gathered again to live in righteousness. And the other nations shall also turn to God,

That they may call upon the name of the LORD
To serve him with one consent.

Thus, after the silence of three-quarters of a century that followed Isaiah, the voice of the true prophet is again heard in the land. But Nahum and Zephaniah only serve to introduce a more powerful prophetic voice, the voice of Jeremiah of Anathoth, that is now also being heard in the streets of Jerusalem.

§ 3. *In the Early Years of Jeremiah's Prophetic Calling, the Good King Josiah Cleans the Land of Idolatry.*

KING JOSIAH had not yet attained his majority, the idolatrous court party was still in full power, when the man who was to dominate his age, even as Isaiah had dominated his, arrived in Jerusalem. His name was Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, and he came from the village of Anathoth, "in the land of Benjamin," a short distance north of the capital. From of old, his birthplace had been the residence of eminent priests, and Jeremiah himself belonged to a priestly family that owned considerable property in the village.

Thus, the young man might have spent his life in the place of his birth in peace and plenty, as a wealthy and honored priest. Jeremiah might have lived happily though obscurely. Instead, his life was an endless tragedy, filled to the brim with sorrow and bitterness and persecution. For it was Jeremiah's destiny to be a prophet in the most critical period of Judah's history, and it was impossible for him to ignore the Divine summons.

It was his fate and he could not escape it. Like

WHERE JEREMIAH'S NATIVE VILLAGE ONCE STOOD

This is the modern ramshackle Arab village of Anata about two miles north of Jerusalem, the site of Anathoth where Jeremiah was born. It lay in the territory of Benjamin and belonged to the Levites. Jeremiah was "of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin." The modern village contains many ruins.

Isaiah, Jeremiah has left an account of his prophetic initiation. God speaks to him:

> Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee,
> And before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee;
> I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations.

The young man is dismayed by the colossal burden that has been laid upon him. "Ah, Lord God," he cries, "Behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child." But God answers:

Say not: I am a child;
For to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go,
And whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak.
Be not afraid of them;
For I am with thee to deliver thee.

Then the LORD touched his mouth and said to him further:

Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth;
See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms,
To root out and to pull down,
And to destroy and to overthrow;
To build, and to plant.

Thereafter, Jeremiah can do nothing but prophesy. He is in God's hand. In the face of indifference or mockery or persecution, he must follow the lonely and tragic road laid out for him. Does he sometimes rebel and stop and turn aside? It is all in vain.

And if I say: "I will not make mention of Him,
Nor speak any more in His name,"
Then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
Shut up in my bones,
And I weary myself to hold it in,
But cannot.

And what is Jeremiah compelled to prophesy? Not gladness, but sorrow; not deliverance, but doom. He is bound therefore to stir up men's indignation and hostility against himself. Nor does Jeremiah belong to those vindictive natures who delight in predicting woes. On the contrary, Jeremiah is gentle and compassionate. His heart is wrung with pity for those whose doom he is forced to proclaim. Hence arises the profound inner tragedy of Jeremiah's life. He cries in his anguish:

Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me
A man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!

Jeremiah is believed to have begun his prophetic calling in his native village. Like Zephaniah, Jeremiah was stirred by the invasion of the wild Scythians early in the reign of King Josiah. They threatened to lay waste the whole of Judah, and the prophet called on his people to gird on sackcloth and repent for their sins.

For I will bring evil from the north,
And a great destruction.
A lion is gone up from his thicket,
And a destroyer of nations is set out.

Fortunately, the Scythians only swept down the coast and went back without penetrating into the Judean uplands. Soon afterwards, Jeremiah changed his residence to Jerusalem. The priests of Anathoth, it seems, were not friendly to the young prophet who denounced their idolatrous rites. Persecution began to be his lot very early in life.

No peace or consolation awaited him in the capital. He found there all the things that his soul hated: idolatry and injustice. He found them among the leaders as well as among the common people. What was worse, even the priests and the prophets were false to their calling.

An appalling and horrible thing
Is come to pass in the land:
The prophets prophesy in the service of falsehood,
And the priests bear rule at their beck.

Thus, about the year 626 B.C.E., Jeremiah began his mission which was to continue for the next forty years.

Five years afterwards, an event occurred in Jerusalem which indicates that the city was not so hopelessly wicked as Jeremiah, in his prophetic fervor, had declared it to be. It is certain that Jeremiah was not the only one who was zealous for the God of Israel and detested idolatry. The prophets of the previous century had not labored in vain. Especially among the Temple priests, the traditions and faith of the *Anavim* were kept alive, and the day arrived when they gained the upper hand over the courtiers and princes.

THE AIN FARA (SPRING OF FARA) NEAR ANATHOTH

The spring is in a deep valley on the road from Anathoth along the Wadi Fara. It is to-day one of the main sources of Jerusalem's water supply. The caves of the steep and rocky slopes were once inhabited by hermits.

It was in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, 621 B.C.E., when Shaphan, the King's scribe or minister, brought him a book which the high priest Hilkiah had discovered in the Temple. The book came to light in the course of repairs which the King had ordered to be made. It must have been hidden in the reign of Manasseh, the idolatrous ruler who persecuted the *Anavim* and destroyed their books. It proved to be the Book of Deuteronomy, the last of the Five Books of Moses.

The minister read the Book to the King on whom it made a tremendous impression. Josiah had in all likelihood already fallen under the sway of prophetic teachings, and his mind was prepared to be influenced by what he now heard. The Book was certainly calculated to impress and inspire. It was a book of laws, a compendium of the Mosaic code, but it was written in the manner of a stirring oration. They were laws prescribing the worship of the One God and commanding personal purity and social justice.

The King heard the terms of the great and solemn covenant between God and Israel. The people were to be true to His Law and He in return would shield and prosper them. The King heard the great lawgiver's appeals and warnings, the glowing promises for obedience and the terrifying threats for disloyalty. He could not but be deeply stirred when he heard words like the following:

> Ye are standing this day all of you before the LORD your God: your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in the midst of thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou shouldest enter into the covenant of the LORD thy God — and into His oath — which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day; that He may establish thee this day unto Himself for a people, and that He may be unto thee a God, as He spoke unto thee, and as He swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob.

The King was well aware how his predecessors had broken the covenant, filling the land with idols and impurities. They had not heeded the fervent appeal which now rang in his ears:

> And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. . . Behold, unto the LORD thy God belongeth the heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that is therein!

The King was overcome with penitence and fear of the doom which was threatened. He sent for advice to a certain prophetess named Huldah, and felt reassured when he got word that the great evil would not befall the land in his day. Then he determined to make the Covenant the law of the land. In the court of the Temple he called together a solemn assembly of the elders of the people as well as of the priests and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. A special platform had been erected from which the new-found book was read to the multitude. The King then rose and called on the people to accept the Covenant. "And all the people," says the chronicle, "stood to the Covenant."

It was a new religious revolution, similar to the one that had been carried through by King Hezekiah, but much more thoroughgoing. The King gave orders to cleanse the land thoroughly of all idols and "high places." Every vestige of the Baal and Assyrian star worship was removed from the Temple and burned, and the ashes strewn in the bed of the Brook Kidron. The Asheroth were broken down and also burned. The dreadful Topheth in the Valley of Hinnom, the place where children were made to pass through the fire to Moloch, was defiled and made unfit for use. All the local shrines were demolished.

Nor did King Josiah confine his campaign of purification to Judah. He extended it to the territory of what

had formerly been Israel. The Assyrian overlord, apparently, was powerless to oppose him, for whatever forces the Assyrian emperor could command were needed nearer home. Josiah came to Beth-el and destroyed the shrine and the altar where the bull of Egypt, introduced by Jeroboam I, was still being worshiped. He then went on and broke down the idols in the other cities of Samaria.

AN ASSYRIAN TABLET FOR EXORCIZING DEMONS

The sick man, who is possessed of the demon to be exorcized, is shown lying on a bed in the center of the plaque. At either end of the bed stands a priest dressed in the scaly cloak of the fish-god (see vol. 1, p. 251, illustration). The other figures make up an assortment of various demons, of whom the large lion-headed figure in the center is the most important. This demon, kneeling on a donkey riding in a boat, has a snake in each hand. A dog and a swine are sucking at his breasts. On his left, is a figure which bears a strong resemblance to the storm demon shown on page 330.

Having demolished the idols, King Josiah, spurred on, no doubt, by the high priest Hilkiah and the other priests of the Temple, set out to accomplish the second aim of his religious revolution: the centralization of worship in Jerusalem. The local shrines were destroyed and their priests migrated to the capital where they were attached to the Temple service. To inaugurate the exclusive worship in the Temple, the King issued an edict calling on all the people to assemble in Jerusalem for the celebration of the Passover. The people came, and the Passover of

that year (621 B.C.E.) was celebrated with brilliant ceremony. "There was not kept such a Passover," says the chronicle, "from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah."

The young prophet Jeremiah participated, no doubt, in the solemn festivities. But, was he entirely satisfied? The prophet's soul is never satisfied, for his visions rise always above the thoughts and achievements of the common multitude.

§ 4. *The Fall of Assyria Brings Babylonia, Now Held by the Chaldeans, Again to the Fore, and, in 597* B.C.E. *Comes the First Babylonian Captivity.*

OUTSIDE little Judah, where the pure worship of the spiritual God had won so signal a victory over idolatry, the great world of cities and empires was seething with vast changes. The doom which hung over Assyria fell upon her at last. In 612 B.C.E., proud and mighty Nineveh was taken and utterly destroyed. All that the prophet Nahum had foreseen came to pass. Assyria, the irresistible and merciless, who, for a century and a half had devastated the neighboring lands and laid her cruel yoke on the nations, was no more.

The conquerors of Nineveh were Scythians, Medes and Chaldeans. The latter were led by their king, Nabopolassar. They had already become the masters of Babylonia. They were a Semitic race, who, like their Semitic predecessors in the Land of the Two Rivers, are believed to have come from Arabia. From the regions around the Persian Gulf which they first occupied, the Chaldeans, by settlement and conquest, gradually pushed

their way north. Like their predecessors, also, they mingled with the earlier inhabitants, adopting their religion, arts and sciences, of which the science of astrology was the most advanced. Eventually, too, they took over the Aramaic language which had become prevalent

THE GLORY THAT WAS NINEVEH

Nineveh lay east of the Tigris opposite the modern Mosul. It first became the capital of Assyria under Sennacherib. Most of its palaces and temples are to-day buried beneath the two mounds of Kuyunjik and Nebi-Yunus ("Tomb of the Prophet Jonah"). The picture shows the palaces and other buildings as "restored" by the famous excavator of Nineveh and Babylon, Sir Austen Henry Layard (1817–1894). The river is the Tigris, the channel of which has since shifted at this point further east. The stairways of the gorgeous palaces are flanked by human-headed bulls carved of alabaster. On the left rises a tower temple which the Assyrians copied from the ancient Babylonians.

throughout the neighboring lands (see p. 133). The region formerly known as Babylonia and the Plain of Shinar now came to be called Chaldea, and for a brief period the Chaldeans played the rôle which the Assyrians were forced to lay down.

Like the other nations, Egypt also rejoiced at the downfall of her powerful rival. At the same time, however, the Egyptians felt uneasy over Nineveh's con-

querors. The Scythians and Chaldeans also represented a serious menace. The Pharaoh, Necho II, moreover, was an energetic and ambitious ruler. The kingdoms of Palestine and Syria, now free of the Assyrian yoke, should, he felt, pay tribute to him.

Accordingly, three years after the fall of Nineveh, the Pharaoh marched north along the coast of the Mediterranean. His purpose was to bring aid to the remnants of the Assyrian hosts who had fled west toward the Euphrates where they were maintaining themselves with great difficulty.

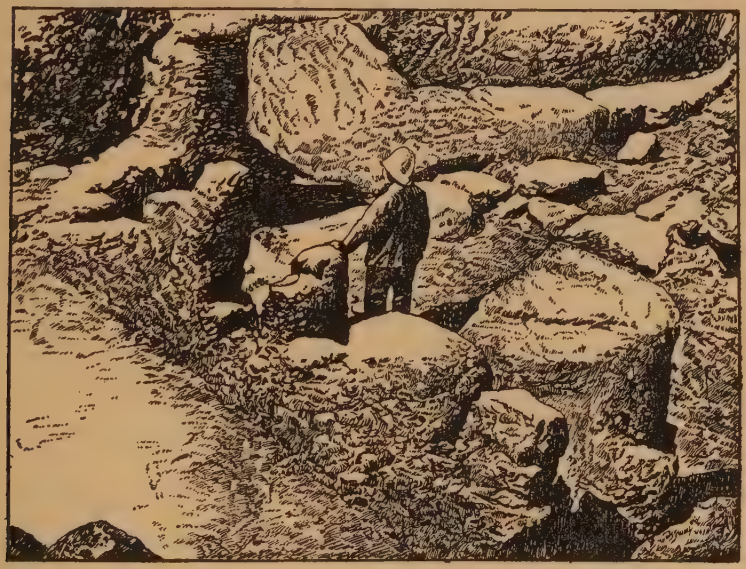
A Scarab of the Pharaoh Necho

The word "scarab" means literally a beetle, an insect sacred to the sun-god, and came to stand for an Egyptian symbolic object in the form of a beetle. This one records the triumphs of Necho who reigned from 610 to 594 B.C.E.

King Josiah had no mind to accept a new master. He had extended his rule to the former territory of Israel, and felt strong enough to oppose the Pharaoh's progress through his country. In 609 B.C.E., near Megiddo in the Valley of Jezreel, Judah and Egypt met in battle, and Judah was overcome. Josiah, fighting bravely in the thick of the mêlée, was slain. In the royal chariot his servants brought his body back to Jerusalem where it was buried. He was only thirty-eight years old, but the religious revolution which he carried through makes his reign one of the most important in the history of his people.

In Jerusalem, the prevailing sentiment was still anti-

Egyptian. Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, whom the people raised to the throne, continued the policy of his father. In the meantime Necho swept on northward. It looked as if Egypt would take the place of Assyria, after all. At Riblah, in Syria, the Pharaoh established his head-



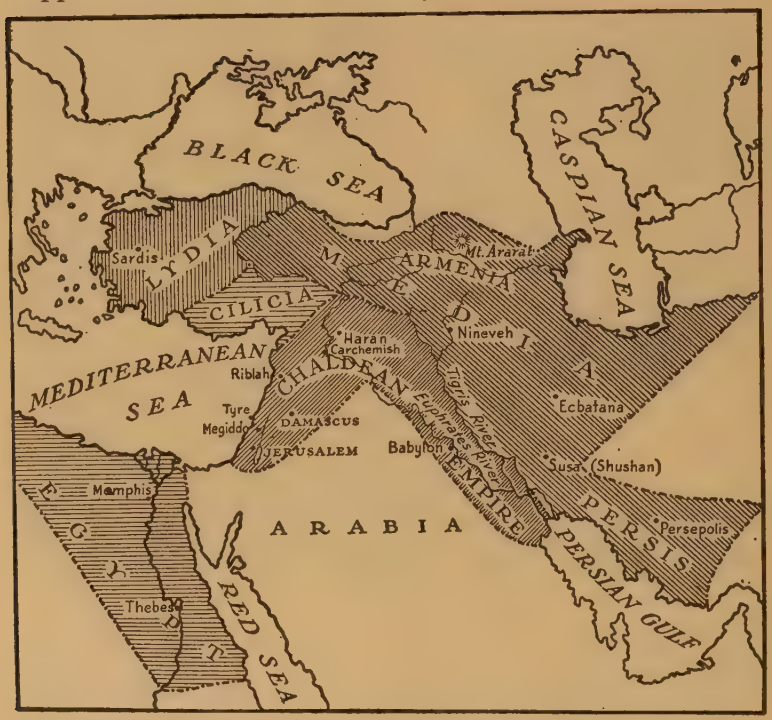
RUINS OF A PALACE AT MEGIDDO

The mound that contains the ruins of ancient Megiddo is to-day called Tel El-Mutasellim ("Governor's Hill"). Excavations in this mound were conducted in 1903–1905 by the German Palestine Society under the direction of A. Schumacher. A number of layers dating from different periods were discovered. The large stone masonry of a palace shown in this picture is believed to date from the time of Jeroboam II.

quarters, and many princes and rulers came to do him homage. Among them was the new king of Judah. But Jehoahaz found no favor in the eyes of Necho who deposed him and sent him in chains as an exile to Egypt, where he died. He had reigned for only three months.

Another son of Josiah, who took the name of Jehoiakim, was made king of Judah by Necho. The Pharaoh

imposed upon the new ruler a heavy tribute of silver and gold which Jehoiakim obtained by levying a special tax on the people. Subjection to Egypt meant also the introduction of Egyptian luxuries and vices, as well as the reappearance of the old idolatry.



THE EASTERN WORLD AFTER THE FALL OF ASSYRIA

(About 600 B.C.E.)

All of the shaded portions, now independent, were at one time or another parts of the Assyrian Empire. Note that the most important region of the north, the Land of the Two Rivers, is now held by the Chaldeans.

But Egyptian domination was soon over. The real heir of Assyria was destined to be not Egypt but Babylonia, now ruled by the Chaldeans. In 605 B.C.E., at Carchemish near the Euphrates, the hosts of Egypt clashed with the New Babylonia and were overthrown.

Scattered bands of the defeated Egyptians fled to their own country through Syria and Palestine. The king of Judah threw off his allegiance to Egypt, and acknowledged the new master.

The commander of the Babylonian forces at the Battle of Carchemish was the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar. The same year his father died, and Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylonia. He was a monarch who vied with the great Assyrian conquerors in energy and ambition. His reign lasted over forty years, and under him Babylon became the ruler and arbiter of the nations.

AN INCENSE BURNER FROM MEGIDDO
This is a "restoration" of the object as made by Schumacher, the excavator of ancient Megiddo (see illustration, p. 347).

Several years after the Battle of Carchemish, the king of Judah changed his policy and stopped paying tribute to Nebuchadnezzar. It was Egypt, no doubt, helpless though she was, who lured Jehoiakim to take this fatal step. After all, the king was mindful of the fact that it was by the grace of the Pharaoh that he sat on the throne of David.

The surrounding nations, all of whom, it would seem, acknowledged the sovereignty of Babylonia, now looked

upon Judah as fair booty. Jehoiakim's rebellion gave them a welcome opportunity to settle old scores. Nebuchadnezzar, the chronicle relates, "sent against him bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Arameans, and bands of the Moabites and bands of the children of Ammon."

Led by the Chaldeans, they swept into Judah and laid siege to Jerusalem. Gradually the elaborate apparatus of siegecraft, which the Chaldeans had adopted from the Assyrians, rose up around the city, embracing it as in a vise. In the midst of the crisis, Jehoiakim died, and his eighteen-year-old son, Jehoiachin, took his place.

The young king held firm. His hope must have been that the Babylonians would find themselves faced with more important business elsewhere, and would abandon the siege. Great, therefore, was his consternation when he learned that Nebuchadnezzar himself was on the way to take personal command of the operations. Jehoiachin decided to surrender in order to save the city. Together with his mother, his ministers, and all his household, he presented himself to the conqueror and threw himself on his mercy.

But Nebuchadnezzar and mercy were utter strangers to each other. The conqueror entered the city and stripped the palace and Temple of all their treasures and ornaments. Then, together with the King and his household, he carried away captive to Babylonia "all the princes and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths." It was the first Babylonian captivity, and it fell in 597 B.C.E., only twelve years after the death of the good King Josiah. By thus depriving Judah of its leading men, its warriors and those capable of making weapons, Nebuchadnezzar expected to render the nation helpless.

The reign of Jehoiachin had lasted only three months, and the next thirty-seven years of his life he spent in a prison in Babylonia. Before leaving Jerusalem, the conqueror placed on the throne an uncle of the luckless Jehoiachin, another son of Josiah, who took the royal name of Zedekiah. He was the fourth monarch to sit on the throne of Judah in the brief period since the downfall of Assyria had thrown the Eastern World into new convulsions.

§ 5. *The Prophet Jeremiah, Fearless, Passionate and Uncompromising, Stands Out as the Dominant Figure of the Period.*

THROUGHOUT those critical years, the voice of the prophet Jeremiah rises above the tumult of war and terror. Now it breaks into a mournful dirge over the doom he sees approaching; now he pleads with his people as a mother pleads with the wayward child she loves; now it crashes like thunder with wrath and menace; now it mounts into a song of hope for the remnant that God, in His mercy, will save and restore.

Nor was Jeremiah's the only prophetic voice during the period. The great prophet had his disciples, and some of them were less fortunate in escaping the hostility of the powerful than their master. One of them, Uriah son of Shemaiah, was put to death by order of King Jehoiakim. Moreover, many of the Rechabites (see p. 145f.), who had a great deal in common with the prophets, were compelled by the troublous times to seek refuge in the capital and added to Jeremiah's following.

Of Jeremiah our knowledge is greater than of any of the other prophets. For Jeremiah had a faithful friend

THE BABYLONIAN "QUEEN OF HEAVEN"

This is another representation of Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, who was worshiped under different names throughout the "Fertile Crescent" (see illustration, p. 247). "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven."—*Jeremiah* 7 17-18

and disciple, the scribe Baruch son of Neriah, who kept a record of his master's words and deeds and sorrows.

To Jeremiah, as to the other prophets, the cardinal sin is idolatry. Like Hosea, he compares his people's worship of idols to the infidelities of a faithless wife.

> Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband,
> So have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,
> Saith the LORD.

It is idolatry which gives birth to the brood of other sins and vices, to oppression of the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, to the perversion of justice, to luxurious and immoral living. But even after the reforms of Josiah, when the land had been purged of idols, Jeremiah's restless spirit was not calmed. The people had cast away their idols, they were now sacrificing to God, but they had not taken God into their hearts. He saw the old sins cropping up again like evil weeds. Bitterly he asks and answers:

Can the Ethiopian change his skin
Or the leopard his spots?
Then may ye also do good,
That are accustomed to do evil.

As for ritual and sacrifice, Jeremiah esteems them as lightly as do the other prophets:

For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices, but this thing I commanded them, saying: "Hearken unto My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in the ways that I command you, that it may be well with you."

Moreover, the old covenant, established between God and the people as a whole, is not sufficient. There must be a new covenant to which the heart of every individual shall consent. Jeremiah, like Hosea, looks forward to the day when every man shall possess, by a sort of mystic penetration, a personal and immediate knowledge of God.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it . . . and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying: "Know the LORD"; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD.

But the days of the "new covenant" were in the far-away future. For the immediate future Jeremiah saw other days. He saw the "day of the Lord," the day of wrath and ruin, the day of death and exile. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, he looked upon as the instrument of God for the punishment of the wicked nations. In a magnificent vision, he exults over the rout of the Egyptians at the Battle of Carchemish.

The swift cannot flee away,
Nor the mighty man escape;
In the north by the River Euphrates
Have they stumbled and fallen.

Nor shall Judah escape the stroke of doom. Foolishly the people trust in the Temple, lulled by the belief that no enemy could enter its sacred precincts. But Jeremiah disillusions them, boldly and ruthlessly.

> Trust ye not in lying words, saying: "The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, are these". . . Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye have not known, and come and stand before Me in this house, whereupon My name is called and say: "We are delivered," that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, whereupon My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes?

And he goes on to declare that the LORD will do to the Temple even as He had done to the sanctuary of Shiloh.

Such was the prophecy which Jeremiah had the courage to proclaim in the very court of the Temple before one of those great assemblies of people who came together from every corner of Judah. It was early in the reign of King Jehoiakim. The priests were there in all their pomp and importance. And there were also present many of those prophets who curried favor with the princes and populace by telling them only what they liked to hear. A great uproar arose among them when Jeremiah had ended. "Thou shalt surely die!" they cried to Jeremiah. And they dragged the prophet for judgment before some of the princes who sat in the gate of the Temple.

"Behold, I am in your hand," said the prophet to the princes, "Do with me as is good and right in your eyes. Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears." The verdict of the princes was

GROTTO OF JEREMIAH AT JERUSALEM

This spot, located just north of the city wall between the Damascus Gate and the Gate of Herod, consists of two caverns in the hill facing south. Here, according to legend, Jeremiah wrote the Book of Lamentations. The "grotto" is now one of the Moslem holy places.

that Jeremiah was innocent. They recalled that, in the reign of Hezekiah, Micah of Moresheth had prophesied in the same vein against Zion and Jerusalem, and that the King had not molested him.

Later in the reign of King Jehoiakim, when the Chaldeans had overcome the Egyptians and the nations stretched their necks to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, the

prophet had a still narrower escape, and this time from the hands of the King himself. Again there was a great assembly in Jerusalem. Jeremiah had dictated his inspired words to Baruch son of Neriah, who had written them down on a roll of papyrus, and now the prophet directed his disciple to proceed to the court of the Temple and read from the roll to all the people. A great dread fell upon the multitude when they heard the prophecies which Jeremiah pronounced against them.

No sooner had Baruch ended than he was ordered to present himself before a council of all the King's ministers and princes, to whom also he read the words of his master. The ministers and princes "turned in fear one toward another." They took the roll from Baruch and it was read to the King. Jehoiakim was sitting in his winter-palace warming himself beside a burning brazier. The words of the prophet stirred in him no repentance but only wrath. He cut the roll into small pieces which he threw into the brazier, and ordered the prophet and his disciple to be arrested. But Jeremiah and Baruch hid themselves and escaped the King's vengeance. Shortly afterwards the prophet again dictated his words to Baruch who wrote them down on a new roll.

King Jehoiakim died, probably while fighting the Chaldeans, and the evils Jeremiah had foretold came to pass under his son Jehoiachin. But what solace could such fulfillment bring to the heart of the lonely and grief-stricken prophet? He saw the young king and his household and the strongest men of the nation led away in chains to Babylonia. Among them were some of the prophet's disciples, particularly one named Ezekiel. But Jeremiah himself was allowed to remain. He remained

in Judah, now ruled by Zedekiah, to be witness to the final disaster which was fast approaching.

§ 6. *In 586* B.C.E., *Jerusalem Is Taken and Destroyed by the Chaldeans, the Temple Burnt Down, and the People of Judah Led Away Captive to Babylonia.*

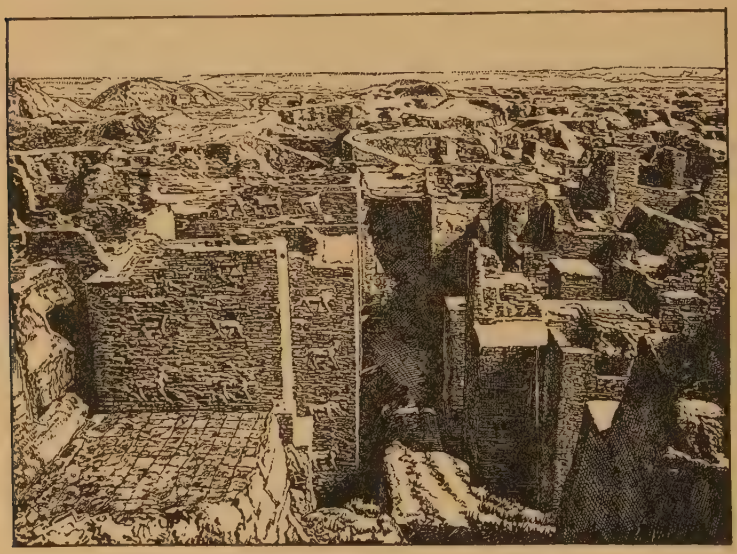
KING ZEDEKIAH, who owed his throne to Nebuchadnezzar, began his reign with the intention of remaining loyal to his suzerain. It was not long, however, before he gave ear to those who counseled a different policy.

The King, in fact, found himself wavering between two parties, one of which held that safety for Judah lay only in submission to Nebuchadnezzar, while the other believed that a coalition of all the subject nations, led by Egypt, would succeed in throwing off the hated yoke of the Chaldeans. Egypt was now recovering from the defeat she had suffered at Carchemish, and, without incurring any extra dangers to herself, she resumed her old game of inciting the nations of Palestine and Syria against Babylonia.

The game was perfectly clear to Jeremiah, who, like the prophets of the previous century, heaped scorn and derision on Egypt, declaring that "Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise." But there were others who claimed to be prophets, and who belonged to the pro-Egyptian party. The court and the army officers also advocated revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and the King was torn between the two parties.

In the third year of his reign, ambassadors from Phoenicia, Moab, Ammon and Edom arrived in Jerusalem to make plans for a simultaneous uprising. Jere-

miah appeared in the streets of Jerusalem with a wooden yoke around his neck. They must bear the yoke, he told his people, or be destroyed. And when a pro-Egyptian prophet named Hananiah broke the yoke, Jeremiah said to him: "Thou hast broken the bars of wood, but thou shalt make in their stead bars of iron."



RUINS OF THE GATE OF ISHTAR, BABYLON

The excavated ruins of the gate are on the left. The entrance was flanked by two battlemented towers. On the outside facing of the walls ran a series of panels, picturing horizontal rows of bulls and snake-griffins in alternation. The bulls were sacred to Adad, the god of thunder, the snake-griffins to Marduk, the patron god of Babylon.

But the fever of revolt mounted in Jerusalem and even communicated itself to the exiles who had been carried off with King Jehoiachin. Jeremiah endeavored to sober them. He wrote to them, advising them not to expect a speedy deliverance. "Build ye houses," he urged them, "and dwell in them, and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. And seek the peace of the city

whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."

In spite of Jeremiah's warning and pleading, the war party in Jerusalem gained the upper hand. In the ninth year of his reign, 588 B.C.E., Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. The Phoenician cities also rebelled, and the country from which effective aid was expected was, of course, Egypt.

Nebuchadnezzar was at the zenith of his power. He assembled a tremendous armament, and, having established headquarters at Riblah, he sent part of his forces against Tyre and the greater part against Judah. Now he was resolved to destroy Jerusalem completely. That city had become a center of conspiracy against him. Besides, it threatened his rear on the road to Egypt, and Egypt was his ultimate objective.

The enemy made short shrift of the other cities of Judah, and in the tenth month of the year laid siege to the capital. The city had been well fortified, for king and people realized that now it was a life and death struggle. Unable to take the place by storm, the Chaldeans built forts around it to prevent it from obtaining food. It would be only a question of time before famine would compel the city to surrender.

Fugitives from all over Judah had fled to the capital, and soon the famine made itself felt. A penitent mood took hold of the people. The rich, in obedience to the Law of Moses, liberated the slaves who had served them six years. Many of the people, including the priests, still solaced themselves with the hope that God would not permit His Temple to be destroyed.

All eyes looked longingly toward the south. They

looked to see the spears and helmets of the hosts of Egypt flash in the sunlight. Would the hope in Egypt again prove vain?

Then, one day, the news arrived that the Egyptians were coming! Hastily the Chaldeans marched away from Jerusalem to meet them. There was an outburst of jubilation in the city. Delivered! The city was delivered as in the days of Isaiah and Sennacherib! So thought the people, and the rich men repented of their early generosity and claimed their slaves again.

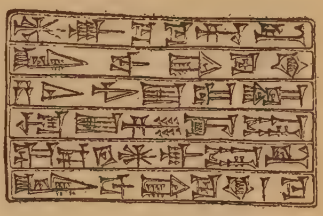
There was one man at least, the prophet Jeremiah, who had no illusions. On the departure of the Chaldeans, he left the capital to go to his native village of Anathoth in order to take possession of a piece of land which he had bought there. But he was arrested and brought back. He was charged with planning to desert to the enemy, and imprisoned. But the King released him, and even gave orders that he should be provided with bread.

Zedekiah begged the prophet for a word from God. The King was torn between anxiety and hope. The course upon which he was embarked was not of his choosing: he was a mere tool in the hands of the war party. Jeremiah offered him no word of comfort. "The Chaldeans," said the prophet, "shall return, and fight against this city; and they shall take it and burn it with fire."

The joy in the capital was short-lived indeed. The hope in Egypt proved vain again. The Chaldeans met them, and either drove them back, or came to an agreement with them by which Judah was to be left to its fate. At any rate the Chaldeans reappeared before Jerusalem and resumed the siege. They directed their main efforts at the northern wall, hurling huge stones against it with

their siege engines. The city defended itself heroically. Famine and pestilence raged within, but the starving defenders manned the walls and hurled back the onslaughts of the Chaldean archers and spearmen.

Jeremiah continued his doleful prophecies. Again he was seized by the princes, who threw him into a miry pit where he would have lost his life, had he not been rescued by one of the King's servants. Secretly the King had him conducted to his presence, and commanded him to hide nothing from him. Jeremiah advised him to surrender: there was no other hope for him or the city. But Zedekiah was not his own master.



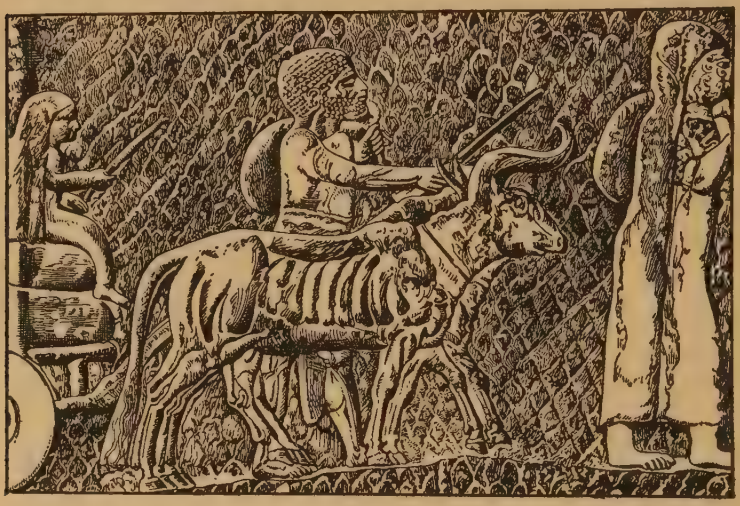
A Brick Stamp of Nebuchadnezzar

The inscription in cuneiform writing, reads: "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, devotee of E-Saggila and E-Zida, son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon." "E-Saggila" means "the house of the lofty head" and was the name of the temple to Bel-Marduk in Babylon. E-Zida was the name of the temple to Nebo, the god of wisdom, at Borsippa, opposite Babylon, and means "the firm house."

On the ninth day of the month of Tammuz, twenty months after the commencement of the siege, the Chaldeans made a breach in the northern wall and entered the city. The heroic defenders, ravaged by famine and disease, could do nothing to prevent them. Realizing that all was lost, the King, with his household and army, fled from the city toward the Jordan. The Chaldeans pursued and overtook him in the plain of Jericho. His forces were scattered, and he and his household fell into the hands of the enemy.

Nebuchadnezzar was in his headquarters at Riblah, and thither the king of Judah and his household were led and brought into the presence of the conqueror. The

Babylonian showed no mercy. The unhappy Zedekiah was forced to look on while his sons were slain. Then his eyes were put out, and he was taken away to Babylon a captive in chains.



OFF TO EXILE

A Hebrew peasant family is being taken into exile (compare with illustration, p. 275). The children are riding in the ox-cart. The grown-ups are on foot with bags slung over their shoulders.

The following month, the month of Ab, Nebuchadnezzar's general, Nebuzaradan, came to Jerusalem and destroyed the city. The walls were broken down, and the houses, including the palace of the King, were burnt. Then, on the ninth day of Ab, he applied the torch to the Temple also, after stripping it of its vessels and ornaments.*

As for the people, those who survived the sword and the famine and the pestilence were led away into cap-

* The Ninth of Ab (Hebrew, *Tisha B'Ab*) is still observed by Jews as a day of fasting and mourning in commemoration of the national disaster.

tivity. Only the poorest of the poor were permitted to remain. Thus, eleven years after the first captivity came the second, and it left Jerusalem "a city of heaps" and without inhabitants. "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!" mourned Jeremiah. "How is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations!"

Over the people who remained, the conqueror placed as governor Gedaliah, a grandson of Shaphan who had been chief minister of King Josiah. Gedaliah established himself at Mizpah, and before long the remnants of Zedekiah's army and other Jewish refugees from various lands were received by him and permitted to resume their life in their own land. Jeremiah also took up his residence in Mizpah, after being released from among the captives.

Hope glimmered again: a nucleus of new life had been established. But the hope was soon blotted out. Incited by the king of Ammon, who had no desire to see the Jewish people come to life again, a certain Ishmael, one of the princes, gathered a band of followers, assassinated Gedaliah and wiped out the Chaldean garrison at Mizpah. The others, fearing the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, determined to flee to Egypt.*

Jeremiah pleaded with them not to abandon the land, but the fear of the Chaldeans was too strong in their hearts. The fugitives forced the prophet to accompany them. They came to Egypt and settled in the region of the Delta where they joined other Jews who had settled

* The third day of the month of Tishri (the day after Rosh Hashanah), when the assassination of Gedaliah is traditionally believed to have occurred, is still observed as a fast day by Orthodox Jews. The day is known as *Tzom Gedaliah,* or the Fast of Gedaliah.

in Egypt at various times in the past. It was Jeremiah's bitter fate to die an exile in the land he hated, after bearing the added sorrow of seeing his compatriots who dwelt in Egypt given over to the worship of Egyptian idols and deaf to his pleadings and warnings.

Thus the "day of the Lord" had come for Judah and Jerusalem, even as, a hundred and thirty-six years before, it had come for Israel and Samaria. Across the story of the Jewish people now seemed written, in letters red with blood and fire, the word "Finis."

TOPIC TWELVE: LITERATURE

A.

THE WORDS OF

JEREMIAH THE SON OF HILKIAH

Of the Priests that Were in Anathoth
in the Land of Benjamin

To Whom the Word of the Lord Came in the Days of Josiah the Son of Amon, King of Judah, in the Thirteenth Year of His Reign

It Came also in the Days of Jehoiakim the Son of Josiah, King of Judah, unto the End of the Eleventh Year of Zedekiah the Son of Josiah, King of Judah, unto the Carrying Away of Jerusalem Captive in the Fifth Month

FOREWORD

1. The Prophet Summoned (1^{4-19}).

2. The Prophet's Plea (2^{1-19}; 3^{21-25}; 4^{1-2}).

3. The Grievous Sins of the People (5^{20-31}; $6^{13-14;\ 20}$; 8^{7}; 13^{23-25}).

4. The Enemy from the North ($4^{5-9;\ 11-17;\ 19-28;\ 18}$).

5. A Vision of Restoration ($31^{2-25;\ 27-36}$).

6. The Prophet Denounces King Jehoiakim (22^{13-19}).

7. Parable of the Potter and the Clay (18^{1-11}).

8. The Foolish Trust in Temple and Sacrifice (*7*).

9. The Prophet Exults in Egypt's Defeat (46^{1-12}).

10. The Perfidy of the Slave Owners (34^{8-22}).

11. The Prophet Bewails His Destiny ($20^{7-10;\ 14-18}$).

12. The Prophet in Despair for His People (8^{18-23}).

FOREWORD ON JEREMIAH

ACROSS the centuries that divide us from the great prophets of Israel, none of these majestic figures stands out in clearer relief than Jeremiah. Regardless of the differences that exist among scholars and commentators with respect to the date or background of this or that passage of the Book of Jeremiah, we feel, after reading the Book, that there, before us, stands a complete life. We feel that we have come into intimate acquaintance with a spirit of giant proportions and unusually strong appeal. Moreover, the world in which this lonely and tragic figure moved and suffered stands out in equally clear relief, as well as the events that impelled him to speak and act.

The active career of the prophet, from the time he departed from his native village of Anathoth until his forced migration into Egypt after the overthrow of Judah, covered a period of some forty years. It was a period crowded with revolutions and crises in the life of the little nation to whom had been entrusted so great a destiny. He came into contact with the profligacy and idolatry of the gay capital, which his soul abhorred, at a time when the wild Scythian horsemen appeared on the horizon and threatened to put an end to the civilization of the Eastern World. He witnessed the revolution against idolatry which the youthful King Josiah carried through in 621 B.C.E. He exulted, no doubt, over the downfall of Nineveh, (612 B.C.E.) although, unlike his contemporary Nahum, he is strangely silent on that event, and he must have sorrowed with the rest of the nation over the defeat and death of the good King Josiah at the hands of Necho the Egyptian (609 B.C.E.). Beginning with the exile of King Jehoahaz and the reign of Jehoiakim, we find Jeremiah reacting with ever increasing frequency to the chain of events that led to the first Babylonian deportation under Jehoiachin (597 B.C.E.) and culminated in the final catastrophe of 586 B.C.E. under Zedekiah.

Unlike Isaiah, Jeremiah exercised no decisive influence on the events of his day. Rather did the billows of life sweep over him and buffet him about. But while he felt their blows on his body, and bitterness at times wrung cries of despair from his soul, the spirit of the man remained essentially whole and unconquered.

Truly had God said to him: "For, behold, I have made thee this day a fortified city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee." Through persecution and hatred, through contumely and sorrow, he walked his way in lonely grandeur. Of him it may be said that to his people and to mankind he left an even more precious bequest in the life that he lived than in the words that he spoke.

In literary grace and finish the utterances of Jeremiah do not come up to those of Isaiah. But his parables and metaphors, drawn from his everyday experiences and the homely life about him, have a peculiar charm and force. They bring us into instant touch with the life of the shepherd and the farmer, the potter's work-shop and the merchant's bazaar, with the fruit trees of the garden and the beasts of the desert. His utterances moreover take us through the whole range of human emotions, from the deepest tenderness to the most passionate indignation and grief. It was his fate to be "the man of sorrows," and to be known to later generations as "the Great Lamenter." Jeremiah is the poet of the wounded heart and the prophet of the unconquerable spirit of man.

THE WORDS OF

JEREMIAH THE SON OF HILKIAH

OF THE PRIESTS THAT WERE IN ANATHOTH IN THE LAND OF BENJAMIN
TO WHOM THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME IN THE DAYS OF JOSIAH THE SON OF AMON, KING OF JUDAH
IN THE THIRTEENTH YEAR OF HIS REIGN.

IT CAME ALSO IN THE DAYS OF JEHOIAKIM THE SON OF JOSIAH, KING OF JUDAH
UNTO THE END OF THE ELEVENTH YEAR OF ZEDEKIAH THE SON OF JOSIAH, KING OF JUDAH
UNTO THE CARRYING AWAY OF JERUSALEM CAPTIVE IN THE FIFTH MONTH [1]

1. THE PROPHET SUMMONED

(JEREMIAH * 1 4-19)

THE young priest from Anathoth received the divine call directly from God. He is dismayed by the task, but God had chosen him before even he was born, and he cannot

[1] This title to the Book of Jeremiah is identical with the first three verses of the first chapter.

* It will be recalled that the second large division of the Hebrew Scriptures is known as *Nebiim* or "Prophets," and that this division is subdivided into *Nebiim Rishonim,* "First (or Former) Prophets" and *Nebiim Achronim,* "Latter Prophets." The Book of Jeremiah is the second book of *Nebiim Achronim,* the first being the Book of Isaiah.

The Book of Jeremiah, consisting of fifty-two chapters, is made up of prophetic addresses and narratives. We may divide the Book into three parts. The first, from 1 [4] to 38 [28], reports Jeremiah's deeds and prophecies from his initiation until the destruction of Jerusalem. The addresses and narratives are not arranged chronologically and in some cases it is impossible to determine the occasion that produced them. The second part, from 39 to 45, deals with Jeremiah's activities from the

but obey. He is conscious of his weakness, but he knows also what power resides in the prophet's word. Compare this account of Jeremiah's initiation with Isaiah's (p. 288 ff.).

Two parables follow the summons. That of the almond-branch expresses the prophet's faith in the fulfillment of God's word. That of the seething pot is believed to be Jeremiah's first warning to his countrymen of the danger from the north.

THE CALL

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying:

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee,[2]
And before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee;
I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations.[3]

Then said I: "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child."[4] But the LORD said unto me:

downfall of Jerusalem through his enforced sojourn in Egypt. The third part, from 46 to 51, contains a series of prophecies directed against foreign nations. Chapter 52 is a sort of appendix giving the history of the rein of Zedekiah, his rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, the siege and capture of Jerusalem, the deportation, etc. This chapter is practically identical with 2 Kings 24^{18}; 25. The basis of the Book of Jeremiah consists of the "words" dictated by the prophet to his faithful disciple and follower, Baruch son of Neriah. The narrative portions may be by Baruch himself, who added further "words" of the master that he remembered.

[2] The expression "to know" is used in the sense of "to choose." It is used in the same sense by Amos (3^2) when he says: "You only have I known of all the families (*i.e.*, the nations) of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities."

[3] Note that Jeremiah's mission is not confined to his own people. Amos and Isaiah, who preceded him, also included the other nations within the range of their prophetic vision.

[4] Jeremiah was probably in his early twenties when the call came to him. "Youth" would here be a better translation of the Hebrew *na'ar*. Jeremiah is overwhelmed by the call, just as Moses was by his. "Who am I," Moses had answered, "that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

Say not: I am a child;
For to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go,
And whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak.
Be not afraid of them;
For I am with thee to deliver thee,
Saith the LORD.

THE PROPHET'S MISSION

Then the LORD put forth His hand, and touched my mouth;[5] and the LORD said unto me:

Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth;
See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms,
To root out and to pull down,
And to destroy and to overthrow;
To build, and to plant.

PARABLE OF THE ALMOND-BRANCH

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying: "Jeremiah, what seest thou?" And I said: "I see a rod of an almond-tree." Then said the LORD unto me: "Thou hast well seen; for I watch[6] over My word to perform it."

PARABLE OF THE SEETHING POT

And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying: "What seest thou?" And I said: "I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is from the north."[7] Then the LORD said unto me: "Out of the north the evil shall break forth upon all

[5] Isaiah's lips had been touched by one of the seraphim with "a glowing stone" as a symbol of purification. Jeremiah's mouth is touched by the hand of God Himself as an act of communication.

[6] The word translated "almond tree" is *shaked;* the word translated "watch" is *shoked,* the exact meaning of which is "I watch attentively." The prophets often used such play on words to make their message more effective. The almond-tree blossoms very early so that the meaning is: I will hasten (or watch attentively) to fulfill my word.

[7] "The face thereof is from the north" probably means that the seething pot is tilted over so that its boiling contents will overflow southward.

the inhabitants of the land.[8] For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.[9] And I will utter My judgments against them touching all their wickedness; in that they have forsaken Me, and have offered unto other gods, and worshipped the work of their own hands.

"Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a fortified city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.[10] And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee."

2. THE PROPHET'S PLEA

(JEREMIAH 2^{1-19}; 3^{21-25}; 4^{1-2})

THIS call to repentance is believed to be one of Jeremiah's earliest utterances. It is certainly among his most beautiful. How eagerly the prophet longs for his people's return to their God! He hears in imagination the very words of true repentance which he so desires his people to speak. The deep tenderness that pervades these passages, as well as the figurative use of the marital relationship, (see p. 232) are strongly reminiscent of Hosea.

[8] The "evil" from the north is believed to refer to the invasion of the Scythians, who, shortly after Jeremiah's call, swept down the coast as far as Egypt and back again, without, however, penetrating into the interior.

[9] *i.e.*, they shall besiege Jerusalem and the other cities. See illustration, p. 276, where Sennacherib is shown on his throne before Lachish, one of the cities captured by that monarch.

[10] The prophet is thought of as an impregnable fortress besieged by all those whom he denounces. This comparison is particularly apt in the case of Jeremiah, who had many personal enemies.

AND the word of the LORD came to me, saying: Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying: Thus saith the LORD:

EARLY LOVE

I remember for thee the affection of thy youth,
The love of thine espousals;
How thou wentest after Me in the wilderness,
In a land that was not sown.[11]

Israel is the LORD's hallowed portion,
His first-fruits of the increase;[12]
All that devour him shall be held guilty,
Evil shall come upon them,
Saith the LORD.

ISRAEL GONE ASTRAY

Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob,[13]
And all the families of the house of Israel;
Thus saith the LORD:
What unrighteousness have your fathers found in Me,
That they are gone far from Me,
And have walked after things of nought,[14] and are become nought?
Neither said they:
"Where is the LORD that brought us up
Out of the land of Egypt;
That led us through the wilderness,
Through a land of deserts and of pits,
Through a land of drought and of the shadow of death,
Through a land that no man passed through,
And where no man dwelt?"

And I brought you into a land of fruitful fields,

[11] Jeremiah thinks of the years when the children of Israel wandered in the desert as the period of betrothal between the LORD and Israel. The desert, of course, was a land "not sown," the people being fed by the miraculous manna.

[12] The first-fruits of the harvest were set aside for the Temple. ("The choicest first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God"—*Exodus* 23 19.) Here, Israel is regarded as the first-fruits of the LORD's harvest, set aside for a sacred purpose.

[13] Jeremiah includes in his appeal the northern tribes also ("house of Jacob"), although it was now about a century since they had been driven into exile.

[14] The "things of nought" are, of course, the Baalim.

To eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof;
But when ye entered, ye defiled My land,[15]
And made My heritage an abomination.
The priests said not: "Where is the LORD?"
And they that handle the law knew Me not,
And the rulers transgressed against Me;
The prophets also prophesied by Baal,
And walked after things that do not profit.[16]

GLORY CHANGED FOR NOUGHT

Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD,
And with your children's children will I plead.
For pass over to the isles of the Kittites, and see,
And send unto Kedar,[17] and consider diligently,
And see if there hath been such a thing.
Hath a nation changed its gods,
Which yet are no gods?
But My people hath changed its glory
For that which doth not profit.

Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this,
And be horribly afraid, be ye exceeding amazed,
Saith the LORD.
For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters,
And hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns,
That can hold no water.[18]

THE PUNISHMENT

Is Israel a servant?
Is he a home-born slave?
Why is he become a prey?[19]

[15] With idol-worship, of course.

[16] The same as "the things of nought."

[17] The Kittites were the inhabitants of the island of Cyprus. Kedar was the name of an Arabian tribe to the east. The two represent respectively the West and the East.

[18] The LORD is "the fountain of living waters" which the people, in their folly, forsake, and "hew them out cisterns" that break and leak, and, at best, contain only stagnant water.

[19] The meaning is: The woes of Israel have not come upon him because he is a servant or a slave, but because of his unfaithfulness. The Hebrew servant had to be offered his freedom after six years (see vol. 1, p. 140), a privilege which the "home-born" slave did not have. The first had sold himself into slavery, the second was born into it.

The young lions have roared upon him,
And let their voice resound;
And they have made his land desolate,
His cities are laid waste,
Without inhabitant.[20]
The children also of Noph and Tahpanhes[21]
Feed upon the crown of thy head.
Is it not this that doth cause it unto thee,
That thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God,
When He led thee by the way?

"AN EVIL AND A BITTER THING"

And now what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt,
To drink the waters of Shihor?[22]
Or what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria,
To drink the waters of the River?[23]
Thine own wickedness shall correct thee,
And thy backslidings shall reprove thee:[24]
Know therefore and see that it is an evil and a bitter thing,
That thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God,
Neither is My fear in thee,
Saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

ISRAEL REPENTANT

Hark! upon the high hills is heard
The suppliant weeping of the children of Israel;[25]
For that they have perverted their way,
They have forgotten the LORD their God.
Return, ye backsliding children,
I will heal your backslidings.[26]

[20] The reference is probably to the Assyrian invasion that resulted in the overthrow of Israel.

[21] Noph and Tahpanhes are Memphis and Daphne, two cities of Egypt, used here to stand for that country as a whole.

[22] *i.e.*, the Nile.

[23] *i.e.*, the Euphrates. The anger of Jeremiah, like that of the prophets who preceded him, is provoked by the policy of seeking alliances with Egypt or Assyria.

[24] *i.e.*, your sins will bring their own punishment.

[25] The term "children of Israel" refers here primarily to Judah rather than to the remnants or exiles of the northern kingdom.

[26] This, of course, is spoken by the LORD to encourage His children to true repentance. Then come the penitent words of the people.

"Here we are, we are come unto Thee;
For Thou art the LORD our God.
Truly vain have proved the hills,
The uproar on the mountains;[27]
Truly in the LORD our God
Is the salvation of Israel.
But the shameful thing[28] hath devoured
The labour of our fathers from our youth;
Their flocks and their herds,
Their sons and their daughters.[29]
Let us lie down in our shame,
And let our confusion cover us;
For we have sinned against the LORD our God,
We and our fathers,
From our youth even unto this day;
And we have not hearkened
To the voice of the LORD our God."

THE LORD FORGIVING

If thou wilt return, O Israel,
Saith the LORD,
Yea, return unto Me;
And if thou wilt put away thy detestable things[30] out
of My sight,
And wilt not waver;
And wilt swear: "As the LORD liveth"
In truth, in justice, and in righteousness;
Then shall the nations bless themselves by Him,
And in Him shall they glory.[31]

[27] Where the idols were worshiped with noisy rites.

[28] *i.e.*, the idol Baal.

[29] This probably refers to human sacrifice which accompanied the idolatry introduced by King Manasseh.

[30] The idols, of course.

[31] These two lines recall the promise of God to Abraham: "In thee shall all the families (*i.e.*, the nations) of the earth be blessed"—*Genesis* 12[3].

3. THE GRIEVOUS SINS OF THE PEOPLE

(JEREMIAH 5^{20-31}; $6^{13-14;\ 20}$; 8^{7}; 13^{23-25})

THE following passages are also believed to date from the early years of Jeremiah's prophetic career. He had come from his native Anathoth to the capital and he was deeply shocked by the many wrongs he witnessed there. With the force and fearlessness characteristic of the prophets he denounces all of them: the oppression of the poor, the greed of the rich, the false priests and prophets, the foolish trust in sacrifices.

DECLARE ye this in the house of Jacob,
And announce it in Judah, saying:

THE SEA ROARS IN VAIN

Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding,
That have eyes, and see not,
That have ears, and hear not:
Fear ye not Me? saith the LORD;
Will ye not tremble at My presence?
Who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea,
An everlasting ordinance, which it cannot pass;
And though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail;
Though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.

BUT THE PEOPLE REBEL AGAINST GOD

But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart;
They are revolted, and gone.
Neither say they in their heart:
"Let us now fear the LORD our God,
That giveth the former rain, and the latter in due season;[32]
That keepeth for us
The appointed weeks of the harvest."[33]

[32] The "former rain" comes in the fall, the "latter rain" in the spring.

[33] "The appointed weeks of the harvest" are the seven weeks between Passover and the Feast of Weeks.

Your iniquities have turned away these things,[34]
And your sins have withholden good from you.

THE EVILDOERS

For among My people are found wicked men;
They pry,[35] as fowlers lie in wait;
They set a trap, they catch men.
As a cage is full of birds,
So are their houses full of deceit;[36]
Therefore they are become great, and waxen rich;
They are waxen fat, they are become sleek;
Yea, they overpass in deeds of wickedness;
They plead not the cause, the cause of the fatherless,
That they might make it to prosper;
And the right of the needy do they not judge.
Shall I not punish for these things?
Saith the LORD;
Shall not My soul be avenged
On such a nation as this?

FALSE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS

An appalling and horrible thing
Is come to pass in the land:
The prophets prophesy in the service of falsehood,
And the priests bear rule at their beck;[37]
And My people love to have it so,
What then will ye do in the end thereof?[38]
For from the least of them even unto the greatest
of them
Every one is greedy for gain;
And from the prophet even unto the priest
Every one dealeth falsely.
They have healed also the hurt of My people lightly,[39]
Saying: "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

[34] "These things" refers to the rains and the harvest.

[35] *i.e.*, they watch.

[36] *i.e.*, their houses are full of *the gains* of deceit, as the fowler's cage is full of the birds he traps.

[37] *i.e.*, the priests teach as the false prophets direct.

[38] *i.e.*, when God's judgment against you is fulfilled.

[39] *i.e.*, they have not gone to the source of the evil because of their foolish optimism.

VAIN SACRIFICES

To what purpose is to Me the frankincense that
cometh from Sheba,[40]
And the sweet cane,[41] from a far country?
Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable,
Nor your sacrifices pleasing unto Me.

THE BIRDS OBEY, BUT NOT ISRAEL

Yea, the stork in the heaven
Knoweth her appointed times;
And the turtle[42] and the swallow and the crane
Observe the time of their coming;[43]
But My people know not
The ordinance of the LORD.[44]

HIS SINS ARE IRREMOVABLE

Can the Ethiopian change his skin,
Or the leopard his spots?
Then may ye also do good,
That are accustomed to do evil.
Therefore will I scatter them, as the stubble that
passeth away
By the wind of the wilderness.
This is thy lot, the portion measured unto thee from
Me,
Saith the LORD;
Because thou hast forgotten Me,
And trusted in falsehood.

[40] Sheba was in the southwest of Arabia.
[41] The "sweet cane" (not sugar cane) was used in making incense.
[42] *i.e.*, the turtle-dove.
[43] *i.e.*, their seasonal migrations.
[44] Compare this passage with *Isaiah* 1[3] (p. 299).

4. THE ENEMY FROM THE NORTH

(JEREMIAH 4[5-9; 11-17; 19-28; 18])

IT IS believed that this prophecy, uttered about 626 B.C.E., *was called forth by the Scythian invasion (see p. 339). The oration is one of extraordinary power and beauty. The majestic images, especially the lines beginning "I beheld the earth," will hardly be found surpassed anywhere.*

EVIL FROM THE NORTH

DECLARE ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem,
And say: "Blow ye the trumpet in the land";
Cry aloud and say:
"Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the fortified cities."
Set up a standard toward Zion;[45]
Put yourselves under covert, stay not;
For I will bring evil from the north,
And a great destruction.

A lion is gone up from his thicket,
And a destroyer of nations
Is set out, gone forth from his place;
To make thy land desolate,
That thy cities be laid waste, without inhabitant.

THE LORD'S FIERCE ANGER

For this gird you with sackcloth,
Lament and wail;
For the fierce anger of the LORD
Is not turned back from us.
And it shall come to pass at that day,
Saith the LORD,
That the heart of the king shall fail,
And the heart of the princes;
And the priests shall be astonished,
And the prophets shall wonder.

LIKE THE HOT DESERT WIND

At that time shall it be said of this people and of Jerusalem:

[45] To guide the multitudes fleeing to the capital.

A hot wind of the high hills in the wilderness
Toward the daughter of My people,
Not to fan, nor to cleanse;[46]
A wind too strong for this shall come for Me;
Now will I also utter judgments against them.

Behold, he cometh up as clouds,
And his chariots are as the whirlwind;
His horses are swifter than eagles.—
"Woe unto us! for we are undone."—

O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness,
That thou mayest be saved.
How long shall thy baleful thoughts
Lodge within thee?

THE FOE AT HAND

For hark! one declareth from Dan,
And announceth calamity from the hills of Ephraim:[47]
"Make ye mention to the nations:
Behold — publish concerning Jerusalem —
Watchers[48] come from a far country,
And give out their voice against the cities of Judah."
As keepers of a field
Are they against her round about;
Because she hath been rebellious against Me,
Saith the LORD.

THE ANGUISH OF THE PROPHET

My bowels, my bowels![49] I writhe in pain!
The chambers of my heart!
My heart moaneth within me!
I cannot hold my peace!
Because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the horn,

[46] *i.e.*, not a wind that will winnow the grain, but a wind that will carry off chaff and grain together.

[47] Dan was at the northern boundary, so that the first tidings of the enemy would naturally come from there. The hills of Ephraim were, of course, much nearer to Jerusalem.

[48] *i.e.*, besiegers.

[49] The bowels were believed to be the source of the emotions, just as the heart was often regarded as the seat of the understanding.

The alarm of war.
Destruction followeth upon destruction,
For the whole land is spoiled;
Suddenly are my tents spoiled,
My curtains[50] in a moment.
How long shall I see the standard,
Shall I hear the sound of the horn?

THE FOLLY OF THE PEOPLE

For My people is foolish,
They know Me not;
They are sottish children,
And they have no understanding;
They are wise to do evil,
But to do good they have no knowledge.

RUIN AND DESOLATION

I beheld the earth,
And, lo, it was waste and void;
And the heavens, and they had no light.[51]
I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled,
And all the hills moved to and fro.
I beheld, and, lo, there was no man,
And all the birds of the heavens were fled.
I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful field was a wilderness,
And all the cities thereof were broken down
At the presence of the LORD,
And before His fierce anger.

For thus saith the LORD:
The whole land shall be desolate;
For this shall the earth mourn,
And the heavens above be black;
Because I have spoken it, I have purposed it,
And I have not repented, neither will I turn back from it.

THE RECOMPENSE OF WICKEDNESS

Thy way and thy doings have procured
These things unto thee;
This is thy wickedness;[52] yea, it is bitter,
Yea, it reacheth unto thy heart.

[50] The "curtains" also refer to the tent.
[51] *i.e.*, all things had returned to the primeval chaos. See *Genesis* 1 [2].
[52] *i.e.*, the results of thy wickedness.

5. A VISION OF RESTORATION

(JEREMIAH 31 2-25; 27-36)

A CENTURY had now elapsed since the northern kingdom was overthrown; nevertheless, Jeremiah's thoughts revert to the exiles of Israel and he looks forward to their return. He was probably encouraged in this hope by the fact that the great religious reformation of Josiah had just taken place (621 B.C.E.), and the king of Judah, unhindered by the waning power of Assyria, was extending his reforms and general jurisdiction over the territory of the north. For once the "Great Lamenter" sings an ecstatic hymn of redemption and restoration, a song of consolation to the grieving Mother of the race, whom, in his fancy, he hears weeping for her exiled children. And he concludes with the proclamation of a new covenant and the doctrine of the indestructibility of Israel.

ISRAEL REBUILT

THUS saith the LORD:
The people that were left of the sword
Have found grace in the wilderness,
Even Israel, when I go to cause him to rest.[53]

"From afar the LORD appeared unto me." [54]

"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love;[55]
Therefore with affection have I drawn thee.
Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built,
O virgin of Israel;
Again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets,[56]
And shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

[53] The "wilderness" must stand for the land to which the Israelites, who were "left of the sword," were exiled. They are now to be restored or "caused to rest."

[54] This is to be understood as being spoken by Israel.

[55] Now God, of course, speaks to Israel. The thought and spirit are remarkably like that of the prophet Hosea whom Jeremiah greatly resembles. Compare *Hosea* 11 4.

[56] The tabret, or timbrel, was a sort of hand-drum.

Again shalt thou plant vineyards upon the mountains of
Samaria;
The planters shall plant, and shall have the use thereof.
For there shall be a day,
That the watchmen shall call upon the mount Ephraim:
Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion,[57]
Unto the LORD our God."

THE RETURNING EXILES

For thus saith the LORD:
Sing with gladness for Jacob,[58]
And shout at the head of the nations;
Announce ye, praise ye, and say:
"O LORD, save Thy people,
The remnant of Israel."
Behold, I will bring them from the north country,
And gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth.
And with them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child and her that travaileth with child
together;
A great company shall they return hither.
They shall come with weeping,
And with supplications will I lead them;
I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters,[59]
In a straight way wherein they shall not stumble;
For I am become a father to Israel,
And Ephraim is My first-born.

ISRAEL "RANSOMED" AND REJOICING

Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations,
And declare it in the isles afar off, and say:
"He that scattereth Israel doth gather him,
And keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock."
For the LORD hath ransomed Jacob,
And He redeemeth him from the hand of him that is
stronger than he.
And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion,
And shall flow unto the goodness of the LORD,
To the corn, and to the wine, and to the oil,
And to the young of the flock and of the herd;

[57] Note that the prophet contemplates the religious and, no doubt, also the political reunion between Israel and Judah.

[58] Jacob, it should be recalled, is another name for Israel.

[59] So they shall not suffer from thirst.

And their soul shall be as a watered garden,
And they shall not pine any more at all.
Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,
And the young men and the old together;
For I will turn their mourning into joy,
And will comfort them, and make them rejoice from
their sorrow.
And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness,[60]
And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness,
Saith the LORD.

RACHEL WEEPS FOR HER CHILDREN

Thus saith the LORD:
A voice is heard in Ramah,[61]
Lamentation, and bitter weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children;[62]
She refuseth to be comforted for her children,
Because they are not.

RACHEL COMFORTED

Thus saith the LORD:
Refrain thy voice from weeping,
And thine eyes from tears;
For thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD;
And they shall come back from the land of the enemy.
And there is hope for thy future, saith the LORD;
And thy children shall return to their own border.

ISRAEL REPENTANT

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself:
"Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,
As a calf untrained;
Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,[63]
For Thou art the LORD my God.
Surely after that I was turned, I repented,

[60] Since the people will bring rich offerings to the Temple.

[61] The traditional site of Rachel's grave is south of Jerusalem near Beth-lehem, but from Ramah, north of Jerusalem, she can see the desolation of Israel.

[62] This scene of Rachel weeping for her children has left a profound impress on Jewish tradition and legend.

[63] *i.e.*, restored.

And after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh;[64]
I was ashamed, yea, even confounded,
Because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

ISRAEL GOD'S BELOVED

Is Ephraim a darling son unto Me?
Is he a child that is dandled?[65]
For as often as I speak of him,
I do earnestly remember him still;
Therefore My heart yearneth for him,
I will surely have compassion upon him, saith the LORD.

Set thee up waymarks,
Make thee guide-posts;
Set thy heart toward the highway,
Even the way by which thou wentest;
Return, O virgin of Israel,
Return to these thy cities.
How long wilt thou turn away coyly,
O thou backsliding daughter?
For the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth:
A woman shall court a man.[66]

JUDAH, ALSO, TO BE RESTORED

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Yet again shall they use this speech
In the land of Judah and in the cities thereof,[67]
When I shall turn their captivity:
"The LORD bless thee, O habitation of righteousness,
O mountain of holiness."
And Judah and all the cities thereof
Shall dwell therein together:
The husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks.
For I have satiated the weary soul,
And every pining soul have I replenished.

[64] A gesture of great sorrow.

[65] The answer, of course, is in the affirmative.

[66] This passage has had various interpretations. The meaning probably is: Israel, as the coy maiden, shall court her God. This interpretation would imply another use of the figure derived from the marital relationship, a figure which both Hosea and Jeremiah liked to use.

[67] The prophecy of restoration is now extended to Judah. These lines are perhaps by a prophet who lived after the exile of Judah.

THE INNOCENT SHALL LIVE

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.[68] And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith the LORD.

In those days they shall say no more:
"The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge." [69]

But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

A NEW COVENANT

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as they broke My covenant, although I was a lord over them, saith the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying: "Know the LORD"; for they shall all know Me,[70] from the least of them unto the greatest of

[68] *i.e.*, I will cause the number of men, as well as of cattle, to increase.

[69] A proverb which means that the children are punished for the sins of the fathers. This belief is even more strongly repudiated by Jeremiah's great disciple, the prophet Ezekiel, who declared: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." See *Ezekiel* 18 [2-4].

[70] Here again, in this doctrine of the immediate knowledge of God, we note a striking resemblance between Jeremiah and Hosea who had declared "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." (*Hosea* 6 [6].) The doctrine may be described as mystic. It proclaims a direct and personal communication between the Deity and the individual man. Priests, prophets or other mediums will no longer be necessary. The knowledge, in other words, is not of the head but of the heart. It is instinctive or intuitive, and accompanied by that uplift of the spirit which we call ecstasy.

them, said the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

ISRAEL ETERNAL

Thus said the LORD,
Who giveth the sun for a light by day,
And the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night;
Who stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar,
The LORD of hosts is His name:
If these ordinances [71] depart from before Me,
Saith the LORD,
Then the seed of Israel also shall cease
From being a nation before Me for ever.[72]

6. THE PROPHET DENOUNCES KING JEHOIAKIM

(JEREMIAH 22 [13-19])

THIS was the same monarch who later destroyed the scroll on which Jeremiah had caused his prophecies to be written down, and whose foolish policy brought on the first Babylonian Captivity (597 B.C.E.). He was apparently a frivolous and tyrannical ruler. Out of this fearless denunciation emerges Jeremiah's conception of the principles that should guide the righteous ruler.

WOE unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness,
And his chambers by injustice;
That useth his neighbour's service without wages,
And giveth him not his hire; [73]
That saith: "I will build me a wide house
And spacious chambers,"
And cutteth him out windows,
And it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.[74]

[71] *i.e.*, the laws that govern the movements of the heavenly bodies, named above.

[72] *i.e.*, as long as the sun, moon, and stars exist, so long shall Israel exist as a nation.

[73] In these two lines Jeremiah accuses King Jehoiakim of imposing forced labor on his people to build his palaces, as was done by the Pharaohs of Egypt.

[74] A red pigment.

Shalt thou reign, because thou strivest to excel in cedar?[75]
Did not thy father[76] eat and drink, and do justice and
righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
Then it was well.
Is not this to know Me? saith the LORD.
But thine eyes and thy heart
Are not but for thy covetousness,
And for shedding innocent blood,
And for oppression, and for violence, to do it.

Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

They shall not lament for him:
"Ah my brother!" or: "Ah sister!"
They shall not lament for him:
"Ah lord!" or: "Ah his glory!"
He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,
Drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.[77]

[75] *i.e.*, is your claim to kingship based on your ability to build palaces of cedar?

[76] King Josiah, who was a good and just ruler.

[77] Failure to obtain decent burial was, of course, regarded as a calamity of the first order.

7. PARABLE OF THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

(JEREMIAH 18 1-11)

THIS parable, drawn as it is from common observation, has become a classic symbol of God's omnipotence. As the clay in the hands of the potter so is man in the hands of God. But note how the basic Jewish religious conception comes out in the parable. For God's power is not arbitrary: it has a moral aim, and is controlled by ethical considerations. Moreover, the clay is not wholly passive. Man has the choice of good or evil, and God shapes man according to the choice he makes. Jeremiah, more even than the other prophets, was fond of conveying his meaning by means of parables, as witness the parables of the almond-branch, the seething pot, the yoke which he placed around his neck (see p. 358), and others.

THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear My words." Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was at his work on the wheels.[78] And whensoever the vessel that he made of the clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.[79]

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in My hand, O house of Israel. At one instant I may speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; but if that nation turn from their evil, because of which I have spoken against it, I repent of the evil that I thought to do unto it. And at one instant I may speak

[78] The potter's machine consists of two stones or wooden disks connected by a rod and turned by foot. On the upper wheel rests the clay which the potter is moulding.

[79] The meaning, of course, is that the potter has absolute power over the clay and can do with it what he pleases. See how Robert Browning makes use of this parable in his famous poem "Rabbi Ben Ezra," stanzas XXV to XXXII.

concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; but if it do evil in My sight, that it hearken not to My voice, then I repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit it.

"Now therefore do thou speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I frame [80] evil against you, and devise a device against you; return ye now every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and your doings."

8. THE FOOLISH TRUST IN TEMPLE AND SACRIFICE

(JEREMIAH 7)

EARLY in the reign of Jehoiakim the prophet delivered this famous address to an assemblage of the people of Jerusalem and Judah gathered for worship in the court of the Temple. Without pity, the prophet demolishes their faith in the merely formal aspect of their religion, the Temple and sacrifices, an aspect which is often used to cover moral vices and social crimes. With amazing courage, he derides the belief that was current among the people that the Temple was inviolate, that no enemy could destroy it. It is easy to imagine what terror his predictions inspired in his hearers.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this word, and say: Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.[81] Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

SAFETY IN RIGHTEOUSNESS ONLY

Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying: "The

[98] The Hebrew participle for "frame," or "plan" (*yotzer*) is the same as the word for "potter."

[81] The occasion was probably a festival when the court of the Temple was thronged not only by Jerusalemites but by worshipers who came from other parts of Judah, also.

temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, are these."[82] Nay, but if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

THE TEMPLE EVEN AS SHILOH

Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye have not known,[83] and come and stand before Me in this house, whereupon My name is called,[84] and say: "We are delivered," that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, whereupon My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes?[85] Behold, I, even I, have seen it,[86] saith the LORD. For go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh,[87] where I caused My name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.

And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spoke unto you, speaking betimes and often, but ye heard not, and I called you, but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto the house, whereupon My name is called, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of My sight,[88]

[82] *i.e.*, these buildings are the Temple of the LORD. The statement, with its repetitions, gives the effect of a superstitious formula. The meaning, of course, is that the Temple guarantees the safety of the nation.

[83] The prophet is apparently thinking of the Ten Commandments which he accuses his hearers of violating (see vol. 1, pp. 123–128).

[84] *i.e.*, which belongs to Me.

[85] *i.e.*, is the Temple the same to you as the cave to robbers, a place in which to take refuge after committing your crimes?

[86] *i.e.*, I have seen your wicked doings.

[87] Shiloh, in the period of the Judges, had been the central sanctuary of the north as Jerusalem was now of the south. The sacred Ark of the Covenant, containing the Tablets of the Law, had rested in its shrine. Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines (see vol. 1, p. 253).

[88] *i.e.*, I will exile you.

as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.[89]

IDOLATRY RAMPANT

Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to Me; for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven,[90] and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me. Do they provoke Me? saith the LORD; do they not provoke themselves, to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, Mine anger and My fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the land; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

SACRIFICE OF NO AVAIL

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh.[91] For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying: "Hearken unto My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in their own counsels, even in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward, even since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of

[89] Ephraim stands for all the tribes of the former kingdom of the north.

[90] The "queen of heaven" was, no doubt, the goddess Ishtar whose worship was brought in, perhaps by King Manasseh, from Assyria (see p. 352, illustration).

[91] The burnt-offering was wholly dedicated to God and no part of it could be eaten. The ordinary sacrifices were eaten by the worshipers and priests. Sarcastically, the prophet tells them they can eat everything, since the LORD does not care for their sacrifices.

Egypt unto this day; and though I have sent unto you all My servants the prophets, sending them daily betimes and often, yet they hearkened not unto Me, nor inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff; they did worse than their fathers.

THE GENERATION OF THE LORD'S WRATH

And thou shalt speak all these words unto them, but they will not hearken to thee; thou shalt also call unto them, but they will not answer thee. Therefore thou shalt say unto them:

This is the nation that hath not hearkened
To the voice of the LORD their God,
Nor received correction;
Faithfulness is perished,
And is cut off from their mouth.

Cut off thy hair, and cast it away,[92]
And take up a lamentation on the high hills;
For the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath.

THE VALLEY OF SLAUGHTER

For the children of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight, saith the LORD; they have set their detestable things in the house whereon My name is called, to defile it. And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire;[93] which I commanded not, neither came it into My mind. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Topheth, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter; for they shall bury in Topheth, for lack of room.[94] And the carcasses of this people shall be food

[92] Cutting the hair was a sign of mourning. This, of course, is addressed to the entire nation.

[93] For the probable location of Topheth see map, p. 263. The sacrifice of children was probably brought into vogue by King Manasseh. Among the Phoenicians it was a regular feature of their worship. In memory of those horrors the Valley of Hinnom, Hebrew *Ge-hinnom,* became synonymous with Hell.

[94] *i.e.,* for lack of room elsewhere.

for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall frighten them away. Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land shall be desolate.

9. THE PROPHET EXULTS IN EGYPT'S DEFEAT

(JEREMIAH 46[1-12])

NECHO of Egypt, who had defeated and slain the good king Josiah and exiled his son Jehoahaz (see p. 346f.), was routed by Nebuchadnezzar at the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.E. *The occasion evoked from Jeremiah, who detested Egypt, the following magnificent song of triumph. The prophet exults in the merited punishment meted out to the arrogant Pharaoh.*

THE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco[95] king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish,[96] which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon[97] smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

EGYPT PREPARES FOR BATTLE

Make ready buckler and shield,[98]
And draw near to battle.
Harness the horses, and mount, ye horsemen,
And stand forth with your helmets;
Furbish the spears, put on the coats of mail.

[95] Pharaoh Necho (spelled here Neco) was the second king of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty and reigned over Egypt from 610 to 594 B.C.E.

[96] The Battle of Carchemish was undoubtedly one of the decisive battles of history. It broke Egypt's power, leaving Jehoiakim without support. It made Neo-Babylonia, known as Chaldea, the heir of Assyria as the arbiter of the Eastern World.

[97] Nebuchadnezzar (spelled here Nebuchadrezzar) was then crown prince of Babylon rather than king which he became a little later.

[98] This is addressed in derision to the Egyptians. The buckler was a small round shield. The "shield" was long and protected the whole body.

EGYPT ROUTED

Wherefore do I see them dismayed and turned
backward?
And their mighty ones are beaten down,
And they are fled apace, and look not back;
Terror is on every side, saith the LORD.
The swift cannot flee away,
Nor the mighty man escape;
In the north by the river Euphrates
Have they stumbled and fallen.

THE PHARAOH'S VAIN BOAST

Who is this like the Nile that riseth up,
Like the rivers whose waters toss themselves?
Egypt is like the Nile that riseth up,
And like the rivers whose waters toss themselves;
And he saith: "I will rise up, I will cover the earth,
I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof." [99]

Prance, ye horses, and rush madly, ye chariots;
And let the mighty men go forth:
Cush and Put, that handle the shield,
And the Ludim,[1] that handle and bend the bow.

THE LORD AVENGED

For the Lord GOD of hosts shall have on that day
A day of vengeance, that He may avenge Him of
His adversaries;
And the sword shall devour and be satiate,
And shall be made drunk with their blood;
For the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice
In the north country by the river Euphrates.

EGYPT'S WOUND INCURABLE

Go up into Gilead, and take balm,[2]
O virgin daughter of Egypt;[3]

[99] "The city and the inhabitants thereof" was a stock expression like the English "root and branch." Hence city is in the singular.

[1] Cush is Ethiopia south of Egypt; Put is probably the same as Punt along the Red Sea; the Ludim are believed to be the same as the Lybians who lived west of Egypt. The warriors from these lands were the Pharaoh's mercenaries.

[2] Gilead was famous for its medicinal balsam.

[3] For this expression see p. 226, note 28.

In vain dost thou use many medicines;
There is no cure for thee.
The nations have heard of thy shame,
And the earth is full of thy cry;
For the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty,[4]
They are fallen both of them together.

10. THE PERFIDY OF THE SLAVE OWNERS

(JEREMIAH 34^{8-22})

THE following selection brings us to the supreme crisis in the life of Judah, the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Zedekiah. Early in the siege, in a mood of sudden repentance, the rich had liberated their Hebrew slaves. Then the Egyptians were reported to be on the way to relieve the city. Nebuchadnezzar was forced to raise the siege to meet them. Thereupon, the masters compelled their former slaves to return. The prophet's sense of justice was outraged. True to his exalted calling, he flayed the magnates of Jerusalem for their perfidy.

THE word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people that were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; that every man should let his man-servant, and every man his maid-servant, being a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, go free; that none should make bondmen of them, even of a Jew his brother;[5] and all the princes and all the people hearkened, that had entered into the covenant to let every one his man-servant, and every one his maid-servant, go free, and not to make bondmen of them any more; they hearkened, and let them go; but afterwards they turned,[6] and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for

[4] These few words are a vivid description of panic when the soldiers flee in every direction, stumbling against one another.

[5] For the conditions that led to the rise of a class of Hebrew slaves see p. 187.

[6] *i.e.*, they repented of their good deed.

servants and for handmaids; therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying:

Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying: "At the end of seven years ye shall let go every man his brother that is a Hebrew, that hath been sold unto thee, and hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee";[7] but your fathers hearkened not unto Me, neither inclined their ear. And ye were now turned, and had done that which is right in Mine eyes, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before Me in the house whereon My name is called; but ye turned and profaned My name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had let go free at their pleasure, to return; and ye brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

Therefore thus saith the LORD: Ye have not hearkened unto Me, to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour; behold, I proclaim for you a liberty, saith the LORD, unto the sword, unto the pestilence, and unto the famine; and I will make you a horror unto all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give the men that have transgressed My covenant, that have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof;[8] the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the officers, and the priests, and all the people of the land, that passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life; and their dead bodies shall be for food unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.

And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into

[7] "If thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, he shall serve thee six years; and in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee"—*Deuteronomy* 15 [12].

[8] This was an ancient religious ceremony by which two parties to a covenant, passing between the parts of the sacrificial victim, bound themselves to be faithful to the agreement. The release of the slaves had, apparently, been accompanied by this solemn rite, a fact which made the perfidy of the masters still more criminal.

the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, that are gone up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.

11. THE PROPHET BEWAILS HIS DESTINY

(JEREMIAH 20 7-10; 14-18)

IT HAPPENED after one of Jeremiah's prophecies of doom against Jerusalem, that Pashhur the son of Immer, who was "chief officer" of the Temple, "smote" the prophet and "put him in the stocks." For a day and a night the prophet bore the suffering and humiliation of public imprisonment. The bitter lament that follows was probably occasioned by that experience. The passage is important also for the insight it gives us into the workings of the prophet's soul. He rebels against his prophetic mission, but the word of the Lord is like "a burning fire shut up in his bones" and he must prophesy.

THE PROPHET'S SHAME AND ANGUISH

O LORD, Thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed,
Thou hast overcome me, and hast prevailed; [9]
I am become a laughing-stock all the day,
Every one mocketh me.
For as often as I speak, I cry out,
I cry: "Violence and spoil"; [10]
Because the word of the LORD is made
A reproach unto me, and a derision, all the day.

THE "FIRE IN HIS BONES"

And if I say: "I will not make mention of Him,
Nor speak any more in His name,"

[9] Jeremiah feels that the words he utters are not really his own. They are the LORD's. He utters them to his own hurt. Therefore, the LORD, he says, has "enticed" him to do it against his will. The LORD has "prevailed."

[10] *i.e.*, whenever I speak I feel compelled to warn the people of the "violence and spoil" that await them.

Then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
Shut up in my bones,
And I weary myself to hold it in,
But cannot.[11]

ENEMIES SURROUND HIM

For I have heard the whispering of many,
Terror on every side:
"Denounce, and we will denounce him";
Even of all my familiar friends,
Them that watch for my halting:
"Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him,
And we shall take our revenge on him." [12]

HE CURSES THE DAY HE WAS BORN

Cursed be the day
Wherein I was born;
The day wherein my mother bore me,
Let it not be blessed.
Cursed be the man who brought tidings
To my father, saying:
"A man-child is born unto thee";
Making him very glad.
And let that man be as the cities
Which the LORD overthrew, and repented not; [13]
And let him hear a cry in the morning,
And an alarm at noontide;
Because He slew me not from the womb;
And so my mother would have been my grave,
And her womb always great.
Wherefore came I forth out of the womb
To see labour and sorrow,
That my days should be consumed in shame?

[11] The prophet suffers from the hatred and derision of his hearers when he speaks; but when he refrains from speaking his sufferings are even greater.

[12] The meaning is that the prophet's "familiar friends," who are really his enemies, are plotting to make him say things for which they can afterwards betray him to the authorities.

[13] The cities referred to are Sodom and Gomorrah whom God destroyed for their wickedness (see vol. 1, p. 30).

12. THE PROPHET IN DESPAIR FOR HIS PEOPLE

(JEREMIAH 8 [18-23])

AMID his fiery denunciations and solemn warnings, Jeremiah remained essentially the "man of sorrows." During the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, all manner of sufferings and indignities were heaped upon him by the leaders of his people. His prophecies were being fulfilled, but he does not gloat, nor does he rejoice over the fate of his enemies. Instead, Jeremiah is overcome with sorrow for the fate of his people.

THE BITTER CRY OF THE EXILES

THOUGH I would take comfort against sorrow,
My heart is faint within me.
Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people
From a land far off: [14]
"Is not the LORD in Zion?
Is not her King in her?"—[15]

"Why have they provoked Me with their graven images,
And with strange vanities?"—[16]

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
And we are not saved." [17]

THE PROPHET'S DESPAIR

For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I seized with anguish;
I am black, appalment hath taken hold on me.
Is there no balm in Gilead? [18]
Is there no physician there?

[14] The land to which Jeremiah sees his people carried off into exile.

[15] It is the exiles whom the prophet, in imagination, hears asking this question, the meaning implied in it being: Why does not the LORD deliver us?

[16] This, of course, is the LORD's answer.

[17] Now the exiles speak, uttering their despair. "The harvest" means the time of gathering the summer fruits. The meaning is that both these seasons have passed and brought us nothing.

[18] See note 2, p. 396.

Why then is not the health
Of the daughter of my people recovered?

Oh that my head were waters,
And mine eyes a fountain of tears,
That I might weep day and night
For the slain of the daughter of my people!

B. A DIRGE FOR ZION OVERTHROWN

(LAMENTATIONS * 1[1; 4; 6; 16]; 2[1; 6-15]; 4[1; 3-5; 9; 11]; 5[1-2; 15-21])

TRADITION ascribes the authorship of the Book of Lamentations to the prophet Jeremiah. The Book, which is read in the synagogues on Tisha B'Ab, the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem, consists of five poems making up a majestic dirge on the great disaster, with graphic glimpses of the sufferings and the havoc caused by the famine and the sword. The poems are composed in a spirit of deep repentance reminiscent of the psalms, and the final poem concludes with a prayer for restoration. In the main, the poems do not follow any definite order, and the following selections are fairly representative.

* *Lamentations* is a little book of five chapters in the third large division of the Hebrew Scriptures, the division known as *Ketubim* or "Writings." Its Hebrew name is *Ekah,* meaning "how," which is the opening word of the Book. It is frequently referred to also as *Kinoth* meaning "lamentations." The Book is one of the five Scrolls (Hebrew, *Megilloth*) which are read in the synagogue as follows: *The Song of Songs* on Passover, *Ruth* on Shabuoth, *Lamentations* on the Fast of the Ninth of Ab, *Ecclesiastes* on Succoth, and *Esther* on Purim.

The verses of Chapters 1, 2, and 4 of *Lamentations* are arranged in acrostic form, the first verse beginning with the first letter of the alphabet, the second with the second, etc. Each of the chapters, therefore, has twenty-two verses. Chapter 3 is also an acrostic, but it has sixty-six verses arranged in groups of three, those in the first group beginning with the first letter, the second group with the second, etc. The verses have a definite rhythm, known as the *Kina* rhythm, and consisting of a line that divides itself into two parts, the first part having three accents or beats, the second having two. The first verse may be taken as an example:

> How doth the city sit solitary,
> That was full of people!

It appears that this was the rhythm that was used for dirges and lamentations. It is found in all the prophets and very frequently in the Book of Jeremiah. Note that Hebrew meter is to be measured not by syllables, as in English, but by accents or beats.

HOW doth the city sit solitary,
That was full of people!
How is she become as a widow!
She that was great among the nations,
And princess among the provinces,
How is she become tributary!

The ways of Zion do mourn,
Because none come to the solemn assembly;[19]
All her gates[20] are desolate,
Her priests sigh;
Her virgins are afflicted,
And she herself is in bitterness.

And gone is from the daughter of Zion
All her splendour;
Her princes are become like harts
That find no pasture,
And they are gone without strength
Before the pursuer.[21]

For these things I weep;
Mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water;
Because the comforter is far from me,
Even he that should refresh my soul;
My children are desolate,
Because the enemy hath prevailed.

How hath the LORD covered with a cloud
The daughter of Zion in His anger!
He hath cast down from heaven unto the earth
The beauty of Israel,
And hath not remembered His footstool[22]
In the day of His anger.
And He hath stripped His tabernacle, as if it were a garden,
He hath destroyed His place of assembly;
The LORD hath caused to be forgotten in Zion

[19] Formerly, of course, the roads to Zion were thronged with those who came to worship in the Temple.

[20] The "gates" of a city were the places where the public assemblies took place and judicial proceedings were held.

[21] These lines are believed to refer to the flight of Zedekiah and his household from Jerusalem (see p. 361).

[22] "The footstool" must refer to the Temple.

Appointed season and sabbath,
And hath rejected in the indignation of His anger
The king and the priest.

The Lord hath cast off His altar,
He hath abhorred His sanctuary,
He hath given up into the hand of the enemy
The walls of her palaces;
They have made a noise in the house of the LORD,
As in the day of a solemn assembly.[23]

The LORD hath purposed to destroy
The wall of the daughter of Zion;
He hath stretched out the line,[24]
He hath not withdrawn
His hand from destroying;
But He hath made the rampart and wall to mourn,
They languish together.
Her gates are sunk into the ground;
He hath destroyed and broken her bars;[25]
Her king and her princes are among the nations,
Instruction is no more;
Yea, her prophets find
Nó vision from the LORD.[26]

They sit upon the ground, and keep silence,
The elders of the daughter of Zion;
They have cast up dust upon their heads,
They have girded themselves with sackcloth;
The virgins of Jerusalem hang down
Their heads to the ground.

Mine eyes do fail with tears,
Mine inwards burn,
My liver[27] is poured upon the earth,
For the breach of the daughter of my people;
Because the young children and the sucklings swoon
In the broad places of the city.

[23] "They" are, of course, the Chaldean soldiers who ravaged the Temple.

[24] "The line" is the plumbline used by builders. Cf. p. 228 and note 37.

[25] The bars were for keeping the gates shut.

[26] Kings, priests and prophets are alike rendered useless. The King, being exiled, no longer rules; the priests give no more instruction; the prophets obtain no more visions.

[27] The liver, like the bowels, was regarded as the seat of the emotions (see p. 381, note 49).

They say to their mothers:
"Where is corn and wine?"
When they swoon as the wounded
In the broad places of the city,
When their soul is poured out [28]
Into their mothers' bosom.

What shall I take to witness for thee? what shall I liken to thee,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee,
O virgin daughter of Zion? [29]
For thy breach is great like the sea;
Who can heal thee?

Thy prophets have seen visions for thee
Of vanity and delusion;
And they have not uncovered thine iniquity,
To bring back thy captivity; [30]
But have prophesied for thee burdens
Of vanity and seduction.

All that pass by clap
Their hands at thee; [31]
They hiss and wag their head
At the daughter of Jerusalem:
"Is this the city that men called
The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth?"
How is the gold become dim!
How is the most fine gold changed!
The hallowed stones [32] are poured out
At the head of every street.
Even the jackals draw out the breast,
They give suck to their young ones;

[28] "Their soul is poured out" also means that they faint and die. Note how the poet is affected by the fate of the children.

[29] The stricken sometimes find comfort in a disaster as great or greater than their own.

[30] *i.e.*, your prophets have not exposed your sins so that you might repent and avert your captivity.

[31] Clapping the hands was obviously a gesture of derision.

[32] The gold and precious stones are figurative expressions for the "sons of Zion."

The daughter of my people is become cruel,
Like the ostriches in the wilderness.[33]

The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth
To the roof of his mouth for thirst;
The young children ask bread,
And none breaketh it unto them.

They that did feed on dainties
Are desolate in the streets;
They that were brought up in scarlet
Embrace dunghills.

They that are slain with the sword are better
Than they that are slain with hunger;
For these pine away, stricken through,
For want of the fruits of the field.

The LORD hath accomplished His fury,
He hath poured out His fierce anger;
And He hath kindled a fire in Zion,
Which hath devoured the foundations thereof.

Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us;
Behold, and see our reproach.
Our inheritance is turned unto strangers,
Our houses unto aliens.
The joy of our heart is ceased;
Our dance is turned into mourning.
The crown is fallen from our head;
Woe unto us! for we have sinned.

For this our heart is faint,
For these things our eyes are dim;
For the mountain of Zion, which is desolate,
The foxes walk upon it.

Thou, O LORD, art enthroned for ever,
Thy throne is from generation to generation.
Wherefore dost Thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time?

Turn Thou us unto Thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned;[34]
Renew our days as of old.

[33] "She (the ostrich) is hardened against her young ones, as if they were not hers"—*Job* 39 [16].

[34] *i.e.*, restored.

C.

The Word of the Lord Which Came Unto

ZEPHANIAH

the Son of Cushi, the Son of Gedaliah, the Son of Amariah, the Son of Hezekiah, in the Days of Josiah the Son of Amon, King of Judah[35]

THE DAY OF WRATH

(Zephaniah * 1 7; 2-6; 8-18)

THE prophet Zephaniah is believed by some scholars to have been a lineal descendant of King Hezekiah. He was certainly a spiritual descendant of the prophet Isaiah. His voice was heard in Jerusalem just prior to the reformation of Josiah, 621 B.C.E. *(see p. 341ff.), and it is quite possible that his influence helped to bring the reformation about. His utterances are characterized by a lofty austerity and a sombre beauty. Within the compass of his little book of three chap-*

[35] This is the opening verse of the Book of Zephaniah and is equivalent to the title. The Hezekiah here mentioned as the great-great-grandfather of the prophet is by some believed to be none other than King Hezekiah. Otherwise, they argue, it would not have been thought necessary to carry back his genealogy so far.

* The little Book of Zephaniah, the ninth among the twelve so-called Minor Prophets, consists of only three chapters. The first proclaims a great and dreadful "day of the Lord" upon Judah, a day of doom and desolation, and is believed to have reference to the invasion of the Scythians in 626 B.C.E. (see p. 339). The second is a prophecy of punishment against the other nations, the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Ethiopians, and Assyrians. The third is a prophecy of restoration for the remnant of Israel and Judah. Some scholars believe the third chapter, and, to some extent, the second also, to have been added by later writers.

ters, he gives expression to the basic prophetic principles, the idea of a "day of the Lord" as a punishment for idolatry and corruption, and of the restoration of a remnant purified and repentant. The Book of Zephaniah furnishes a good insight into the religious and social conditions that developed in Judah as a result of the reaction under Manasseh and Amon, in particular of the Assyrian idolatry that was introduced into Jerusalem, and of the aping of foreign customs which prevailed.

In the following passages Zephaniah proclaims the "day of the Lord." They are believed to have been called out by the onrush of the wild Scythians who swept down the Mediterranean coast about 626 B.C.E.

HOLD thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD;[36]
For the day of the LORD is at hand,
For the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice,
He hath consecrated His guests.[37]

THE IMPENDING DOOM

I will utterly consume all things
From off the face of the earth,
Saith the LORD.
I will consume man and beast,
I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea,
And the stumblingblocks with the wicked;[38]
And I will cut off man from off the face of the earth,
Saith the LORD.

THE GUILTY MARKED FOR PUNISHMENT

And I will stretch out My hand upon Judah,
And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;
And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,[39]

[36] This verse may be regarded as an introduction or prologue in which the prophet strikes the key of his message.

[37] The sacrifice is Israel, the guests are the enemies of Israel who are to devour him, and who have been "consecrated" or prepared for the occasion.

[38] The stumblingblocks are the things, like idols, that cause men to act wickedly. They, as well as the evildoers themselves, shall be destroyed.

[39] *i.e.*, I will cut off the worship of Baal to the last vestige.

And the name of the idolatrous priests with the priests;[40]
And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops;[41]
And them that worship, that swear to the LORD
And swear by Malcam;[42]
Them also that are turned back from following the LORD;
And those that have not sought the LORD, nor inquired after Him.
And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice,
That I will punish the princes, and the king's sons,[43]
And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.[44]
In the same day also will I punish all those that leap over the threshold,[45]
That fill their master's house with violence and deceit.

THE COMING OF THE FOE

And in that day, saith the LORD,
Hark! a cry from the fish gate,
And a wailing from the second quarter,[46]
And a great crashing from the hills.
Wail, ye inhabitants of Maktesh,[47]
For all the merchant people are undone;
All they that were laden with silver are cut off.

PUNISHMENT OF THE SELF-SATISFIED

And it shall come to pass at that time,
That I will search Jerusalem with lamps;

[40] *i.e.*, the priests of the foreign cults together with the regular priests of the Temple.

[41] This was the star worship that came into Judah from the Assyrians.

[42] Malcam or Milcom was the national god of the Ammonites. There were Jews who worshiped the LORD and the idols also.

[43] "The princes" are the nobles, "the king's sons" is an expression that stands for the royal household in general.

[44] Foreign fashions in dress, Assyrian or Egyptian, had obviously been adopted by the ruling classes of Judah to the grief of the prophets.

[45] The meaning of this expression is obscure. It may be a figure of speech describing those who flagrantly disregard the bounds of the law. It may also refer to the royal bodyguard of Philistine mercenaries. It was a superstition among the Philistines not to step upon a threshold.

[46] The fish-gate was in the northern wall of the city and opened right on the second quarter (see map, p. 263).

[47] Maktesh is believed to have been the name of the merchants' quarter located in the upper Tyropean Valley.

And I will punish the men that are settled on their lees,[48]
That say in their heart:
"The LORD will not do good, neither will He do evil."
Therefore their wealth shall become a booty,
And their houses a desolation;
Yea, they shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them,
And they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink the wine thereof.

THE DAY OF WRATH

The great day of the LORD is near,
It is near and hasteth greatly,
Even the voice of the day of the LORD,
Wherein the mighty man crieth bitterly.
That day is a day of wrath,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of wasteness and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
A day of the horn and alarm,
Against the fortified cities, and against the high towers.
And I will bring distress upon men,
That they shall walk like the blind,
Because they have sinned against the LORD;
And their blood shall be poured out as dust,
And their flesh as dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold
Shall be able to deliver them
In the day of the LORD's wrath;
But the whole earth shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy;
For He will make an end, yea, a terrible end,
Of all them that dwell in the earth.

[48] A remarkably expressive phrase. It means those who had become confirmed or petrified in their false beliefs. When the juice of the grape ceases to ferment, it "settles on its lees."

D.

THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH:

The Book of the Vision of

NAHUM THE ELKOSHITE [49]

The mountains quake at Him,
And the hills melt;
And the earth is upheaved at His presence,
Yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.
—*Nahum* 1 [5].

A PAEAN FOR THE DOWNFALL OF NINEVEH

(Nahum * 2; 3 [1-3; 12-13; 18-19])

TO UNDERSTAND fully the burst of exultation with which the prophet Nahum greets the impending downfall of Nineveh, one must bear in mind the irresistible strength, ferocity and unimaginable cruelty which Assyria stood for to the nations she victimized. For centuries Assyria had been the bully and the scourge of the earth. Upon all the nations had her "wickedness passed continually." Now her doom was upon her. The Chaldeans from the south and the "Umman-manda," or hordes from the north, including the Scythians and the Medes, were battering at

[49] This is the first verse of the Book of Nahum and may be regarded as its title. "Burden" means utterance. The Hebrew word means literally "a lifting up," in this case, of the voice. The most probable location of Elkosh, Nahum's place of residence, was in Judah some twenty miles southwest of Jerusalem.

* The three chapters that make up the Book of Nahum deal with a single theme: the destruction of Nineveh, capital of Assyria, and the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. Chapter 1 introduces the theme with an exalted description of God's power as a punisher and avenger. Chapter 2 presents the picture of Nineveh's downfall. Chapter 3 describes Assyria's greed and cruelty for which her doom has been laid upon her. *Nahum* is the seventh in the "Book of the Twelve," the twelve being the so-called Minor Prophets (see p. 219, note).

her gates. The prophet expresses the relief and jubilation of the entire earth. The Lord, Who is "a jealous and avenging God," Whose way is "in the whirlwind and in the storm," has struck at last.

The picture Nahum draws of Nineveh's downfall is superb. In a series of swift flashes we see the attacking hosts swarming into the city, the gates opened, the people in flight, the treasures plundered, the city that was once "the den of lions" deserted and silent. And the whole is lifted above the level of mere poetry by the conception of a God of justice who "pours out his fury like fire" upon the wicked. What does Assyria mean to modern mankind? Many monuments of her art and civilization have been unearthed. But it is not surprising that to many men her principal importance lies in the fact that, as the eminent Biblical scholar, Prof. S. R. Driver, puts it, she "had given occasion to the prophets of Israel for some of their greatest utterances."

GOOD TIDINGS FOR JUDAH

BEHOLD upon the mountains the feet of him
That bringeth good tidings, that announceth peace![50]
Keep thy feasts, O Judah,
Perform thy vows;[51]
For the wicked one shall no more pass through thee;
He is utterly cut off.

NINEVEH'S DEFENCES ARE VAIN

A maul is come up before thy face;[52]
Guard the defences,
Watch the way, make thy loins strong,
Fortify thy power mightily!
The shield of his mighty men[53] is made red,

[50] The prophet sees the herald of the great news of Assyria's downfall coming up the hills.

[51] A man made vows in order to be delivered from danger. Deliverance has come. The vows may now be paid.

[52] Now the prophet addresses Nineveh. The "maul," is, of course, the crusher, or the enemy. Ironically, the prophet bids Nineveh look to her defenses.

[53] The mighty men of the enemy, of course.

The valiant men are in scarlet;
The chariots are fire of steel in the day of his preparation,
And the cypress spears are made to quiver.
The chariots rush madly in the streets,
They jostle one against another in the broad places;
The appearance of them is like torches,
They run to and fro like the lightnings.

HER LEADERS STUMBLE

He[54] bethinketh himself of his worthies;
They stumble in their march;
They make haste to the wall thereof,
And the mantelet[55] is prepared.
The gates of the rivers are opened,[56]
And the palace is dissolved.[57]
And the queen is uncovered, she is carried away,
And her handmaids moan as with the voice of doves,
Tabering upon their breasts.[58]

HER WEALTH IS A SPOIL

But Nineveh hath been from of old like a pool of water;[59]
Yet they flee away;
"Stand, stand";
But none looketh back.

Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold;
For there is no end of the store,
Rich with all precious vessels.
She is empty, and void, and waste;
And the heart melteth, and the knees smite together,
And convulsion is in all loins,
And the faces of them all have gathered blackness.

[54] *i.e.*, the Assyrian ruler, who now turns to his captains and generals.

[55] The mantelet was a movable cover protecting the soldiers who operated the battering ram.

[56] Nineveh lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris River and was protected by walls with moats between them.

[57] *i.e.*, with terror. "All the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us"—*Joshua* 2[24].

[58] *i.e.*, beating the breast, which indicated despair.

[59] *i.e.*, a place to which people are attracted.

THE LION IS SMITTEN IN HIS LAIR

Where is the den of the lions,[60]
Which was the feeding-place of the young lions,
Where the lion and the lioness walked,
And the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?
The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps,
And strangled for his lionesses,
And filled his caves with prey,
And his dens with ravin.[61]

Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts,
And I will burn her chariots in the smoke,
And the sword shall devour thy young lions;
And I will cut off thy prey from the earth,
And the voice of thy messengers [62] shall no more be heard.

NINEVEH IS A HEAP OF CORPSES

Woe to the bloody city!
It is all full of lies and rapine;
The prey departeth not.[63]
Hark! the whip, and hark! the rattling of wheels;
And prancing horses, and bounding chariots;
The horseman charging,
And the flashing sword, and the glittering spear;[64]
And a multitude of slain, and a heap of carcasses;
And there is no end of the corpses,
And they stumble upon their corpses.

HER STRENGTH IS FLED

All thy fortresses shall be like fig-trees with the first-ripe figs;
If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.
Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women;
The gates of thy land are set wide open unto thine enemies;
The fire hath devoured thy bars.[65]

[60] The "den of the lions" is, of course, Nineveh. Her rulers, mighty, fierce and cruel, are compared to lions.

[61] *i.e.*, plunder.

[62] Who came bearing Assyria's hateful demands for tribute and other exactions.

[63] The prophet still has in mind the image of "the den of lions."

[64] The sword and spear belong to the infantry who follow the chariots and the horsemen.

[65] *i.e.*, thy defences.

THE NATIONS REJOICE IN HER DOWNFALL

Thy shepherds [66] slumber, O king of Assyria,
Thy worthies are at rest;
Thy people are scattered upon the mountains,
And there is none to gather them.
There is no assuaging of thy hurt,
Thy wound is grievous;
All that hear the report of thee
Clap the hands over thee; [67]
For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

[66] *i.e.*, thy leaders.
[67] In derision, of course.

END OF VOLUME TWO

OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

Volume Two

COURSE OF STUDY

PREFACE TO COURSE OF STUDY

THE OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE is intended primarily for young people who desire to achieve at least the rudiments of a Jewish education and are willing to study in order to attain it.

A systematic study of this OUTLINE will give the student a store of knowledge consisting of the history of the Jewish people from the earliest times to the present, an acquaintance with the history and civilization of the nations with whom the Jews have come into contact, the geography of the different lands in which the Jews have lived, the beliefs and modes of life of the Jewish people at different periods, and their present-day status and problems throughout the world. In addition, he will have a fair acquaintance with the entire range of Jewish literature, from the Bible to the contemporary writers in Hebrew, Yiddish and other languages.

The Course of Study which follows has been designed to assist the student in acquiring and organizing this knowledge. The Course consists of four parts. The first is a summary of the text of the topic written in brief sentences, each one aiming to embody an important fact. The second consists of questions on the text and on the literature, including map work. These questions are designed to stimulate thinking and to compel the organization of the knowledge acquired. The third part of the Course offers a number of subjects for essays, for the further organization of the knowledge acquired and for the stimulation of the imagination. The fourth consists of suggestions for additional reading. This part, it should be noted, does not pretend to be a bibliography. It proposes only such readings as the student will find interesting as well as helpful.

COURSE OF STUDY

TOPIC SEVEN

David the King

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. The news of Saul's defeat and death is brought to David at Ziklag. David is overcome with sorrow. He expresses his grief for Saul and Jonathan in the famous elegy beginning with the words "Thy beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!"

David's Grief for Saul and Jonathan

He then proceeds to Hebron and is elected king by the elders of Judah. In Transjordania, Abner, Saul's general, proclaims as king a surviving son of Saul named Ishbaal. Civil war breaks out between David and Ishbaal. The latter grows weaker, and Abner goes over to the side of David. But Joab, David's general, treacherously slays Abner. Then Ishbaal is assassinated. Though David is innocent of those crimes, they further his ambition. In 1006 B.C.E. he is anointed king over all Israel.

David Becomes King over All Israel

§ 2. After considerable warfare, David succeeded in throwing off the yoke of the Philistines. The second important achievement of his early reign was the capture of Jerusalem. He made that city his capital.

Two Great Achievements

David chose Jerusalem for his capital, first, because of its central location; second, because its choice would not provoke tribal jealousies; third, because of its strategic strength. East, south and west, the city is surrounded by the valleys of Kidron and Hinnom. The hills of Ophel and Moriah rising from these valleys could be easily defended. On these hills the city was built.

Jerusalem the Political Capital

David then transferred the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Thus that city became the religious capital of the nation as well.

Jerusalem the Religious Capital

David's desire was to build a magnificent temple to God. But he left that to his successor. Other affairs were too pressing. Besides, he was "a man of war and had shed blood." But he started Jerusalem on its career as the Holy City of mankind.

§ 3. The surrounding nations became alarmed at David's success. But David set up a well-organized and centralized government, and created an efficient fighting force. The latter consisted of a small company of *gibborim,* a palace guard and a national army.

David's Government

The Ammonites, aided by the Arameans, defied the king of Israel. They were defeated by Joab. The Arameans were routed by David himself. David then entered the Ammonite capital Rabbath-ammon and made the country tributary. Damascus and Zobah, Aramean countries, also became subject to David.

Ammon and Aram Conquered

Amalek, Israel's hereditary enemy, was crushed. Moab was defeated and compelled to pay tribute. The Edomites were made subject, and, after revolting, were again defeated. Other nations, like the Phoenicians, who did not make war on David, became his allies.

Amalek, Moab and Edom Vanquished

Thus David's kingdom became an empire. It stretched from the Euphrates to the Red Sea and from the Mediterranean to the Syrian Desert. No foreign enemy was in sight to menace David's frontiers.

Israel Becomes an Empire

§ 4. But domestic troubles arose which disturbed the later years of his reign. The King himself was not without faults. He committed a serious offense by robbing Uriah, one of his officers, of his wife, and contriving his death. But the King did not remain unpunished. The prophet Nathan appeared before him, and boldly accused him of the crime. "I have sinned before the LORD," David confessed.

David, Bathsheba and Nathan

But the most serious disturbance was the revolt led by his son Absalom. This prince was of a vain and violent nature. His half-brother Amnon, guilty of a serious crime, had fallen a victim to his vengeance. Absalom, after courting popular favor, went to Hebron where he raised the standard of revolt.

Absalom Revolts

All classes of malcontents joined Absalom. David and his loyal followers fled across the Jordan. Absalom took possession of Jerusalem. But, persauded by the crafty Hushai, who was secretly loyal to David, he delayed pursuing his father. David had time to gather strength. The two sides clashed at the Battle of the Forest of Ephraim, east of the Jordan. Absalom was routed. He tried to escape, but his long hair caught in the branches of a tree. Joab found him and slew him. David was heartbroken at the death of his son.

The Revolt Fails

Just as David was about to return, a new revolt broke out. The cause was the jealousy between Ephraim and Judah, between the north and the south. The leader was a Benjaminite, named Sheba. The rebellion was put down by Joab and Sheba was slain.

Sheba's Rebellion

David had triumphed again. His throne stood firm. He poured out his thankfulness in beautiful psalms. David was a great poet. God, he declared, had established his throne for all generations.

§ 5. There was no menace to David's throne from Saul's descendants. Meribaal, Jonathan's surviving son, was befriended by David and lived in his household. Two sons of Saul and five grandsons were slain by the Gibeonites, whom Saul had once treated very cruelly.

Saul's Descendants

Toward the end of David's reign, a pestilence broke out in the land. The people believed it was caused by a census which David had ordered Joab to take. Numbering the people was regarded as sinful.

The Pestilence

But the most serious problem was that of the succession. Adonijah, the eldest son, believed himself destined for the throne. David, however, had promised the throne to his son Solomon. Solomon's mother was Bathsheba. The prophet Nathan and the priest Zadok also supported Solomon.

Adonijah *vs.* Solomon

Adonijah made a great feast and had himself proclaimed king. But Bathsheba demanded that David make good his promise. David ordered Nathan and Zadok to anoint Solomon. Adonijah and his party scattered. Solomon was recognized as David's successor.

Solomon Victorious

David, the King Supreme

After a reign of forty years, David died. He had united Israel and made him a great power. He was a splendid conqueror and a wise ruler. He is remembered as Israel's greatest king.

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *David Chosen King*

1. What effect did the news of the Battle of Gilboa have on David?

2. Do you discover any difference between David's grief for Jonathan and his grief for Saul? If so, what is it?

3. What was the most serious danger that threatened Israel after the Battle of Gilboa?

4. Why did David proceed to Hebron?

5. Recount the manner of Abner's death.

6. Recount the manner of Ishbaal's death.

7. How did those two crimes advance the cause of David?

§ 2. *Jerusalem the Capital*

8. What was David's first task as king and how did he accomplish it?

9. Who were his *gibborim?*

10. Why did not David make Hebron his capital? Why not Shechem?

11. Give an account of the capture of Jerusalem by David.

12. What were the reasons that impelled David to make Jerusalem his capital?

13. Draw a topographical map of the hills and valleys of Jerusalem, indicating its strategic advantages. The map should make mention of the following places: Valley of Hinnom, Valley of the Kidron, Tyropean Valley, Ophel, Moriah, Zion and Mount of Olives.

14. How did David make Jerusalem the religious capital of Israel?

15. Why did David desire to build an impressive temple?

16. State two reasons that prevented him from doing so.

17. How does Jerusalem figure in the religious consciousness of mankind?

§ 3. *David's Conquests*

18. Why were the surrounding nations alarmed at David's success?

19. Describe the organization of David's government.

20. Describe the organization of his military forces.

21. What incident led to the war with Ammon?

22. Give an account of the vanquishing of Ammon.

23. Recount David's campaign against the Arameans.

24. What other nations were made subject to David?

25. What important possessions did David acquire as a result of the Battle of the Valley of Salt?

26. What were the relations between David and the Phoenicians?

27. What were the boundaries of David's empire?

§ 4. *David's Domestic Troubles*

28. In what respect is the story of David's guilt with Bathsheba different from similar stories in which monarchs are the offenders?

29. Tell how Nathan stirred the king's conscience until he brought him to confess.

30. How did Absalom proceed to undermine David's authority?

31. What were the various causes of the discontent that existed?

32. Give an account of Absalom's revolt, mentioning among others the following personages: Ahitophel, Hushai, Joab and Amasa.

33. Describe the Battle of the Forest of Ephraim.

34. How did David receive the news of Absalom's death?

35. What was the cause of Sheba's rebellion?

36. What divine promise did David perceive in his triumph?

37. What lines would you offer from the quotation on p. 29 in support of the claim that David was a great poet?

§ 5. *David Triumphant*

38. How did David treat the son of Jonathan?

39. Why did the Gibeonites demand the lives of Saul's descendants?

40. Why did the people object to David's census?

41. How did Adonijah endeavor to make sure of his succession? What is a *coup d'état?*

42. Tell how Bathsheba acted in the emergency that arose as a result of Adonijah's *coup d'état.*

43. What was the outcome of the rivalry between Adonijah and Solomon?

44. Give a brief estimate of David's achievements.

45. How does David figure in the historic consciousness of the Jewish people?

b. LITERATURE

1. *David's* Gibborim

1. Why does David pour out "unto the LORD" the water brought by the heroes?

2. *The Parable of Nathan the Prophet*

2. Retell this parable in your own words.

3. Explain how the parable applied to David.

4. What is the climax of this story? State why you think so.

3. *David's Flight from Absalom*

5. Why does David refuse to allow the Ark of the Covenant to accompany him?

6. What incidents in this story reveal the following traits in David's character: resourcefulness, decision, piety, self-restraint, ability to inspire loyalty.

7. Explain the following expressions: "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." "He will smite the city with the edge of the sword." "Thou art taken in thine own mischief."

4. *The Battle of the Forest of Ephraim*

8. What moral may be drawn from the manner in which Absalom met his end?

9. What is the effect of the change of scene from the battlefield to the gate of the city where David sat waiting for news?

10. Explain the following expressions: "The king gave the captains charge concerning Absalom." "They lifted up their hand against the lord my king." "Thou hast shamed the faces of all thy servants." "Speak to the heart of thy servants."

5. *David Bids Solomon Build the Temple*

11. Why must not the Temple be built by David?

12. What else does David command Solomon to do?

13. Point out similarities in language and spirit in this passage and in Deuteronomy (see vol. 1, p. 171 ff.).

6. *The Psalms*

a. When David Fled before Saul

14. The 57th Psalm consists of a prayer and a song of praise. Point out where the prayer ends and the song of praise begins.

15. Point out the two lines that serve as a refrain or chorus.

16. Explain the meaning of the sentence: "Thou art my portion in the land of the living."

17. Explain the meaning of the sentence: "The righteous shall crown themselves because of me."

b. The King's Declaration of Policy

18. This Psalm (101) has been called "a mirror for magistrates." Why?

19. How, in your own words, does the king declare he will conduct himself as ruler?

c. The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

20. What is meant by the tribal or national conception of the Deity? Do the first two lines of Psalm 24 express such a conception? Give reasons for your answer.

21. Compare the three lines beginning with the words "He that hath clean hands," with Micah's answer to the question: "What doth the LORD require of thee?" (see p. 323).

22. Compare the two answers referred to above with the answer, in Psalm 15, to the question: "LORD, who shall sojourn in thy Tabernacle?"

d. When the King Fought His Enemies

23. Explain how the four lines beginning "Thou hast given a banner," form the transition between the first part of Psalm 60 and the second.

24. Point out the difference in tone between these two parts.

e. When David Fled from Absalom

25. Show how the line "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD" (Psalm 3) sums up all that had gone before.

26. Is this Psalm a prayer or a song of praise, or both? Give reasons for your answer.

27. In Psalm 63, pick out the line that, in your judgment, expresses the most intense religious passion.

28. Name this passion. Would you call it awe, or fear, or love?

II Psalms of Praise and Adoration

29. Point out the parallelisms in the lines beginning "When I behold thy heavens" (Psalm 8).

30. What two lines begin and end this Psalm? What is the effect of this repetition?

31. What is meant by the expression "a cosmic vision"? Show how the first part of Psalm 19 contains such a vision.

32. Is the change of thought in this Psalm beginning with the words "The law of the LORD is perfect" a natural one? Give reasons for your answer.

33. Point out how a knowledge of shepherd life in Palestine helps to an understanding of Psalm 23.

34. Explain the meaning of the sentence: "My cup runneth over."

35. Why is "the Psalm of the Seven Thunders" an apt name for Psalm 29?

36. "The story of creation in Genesis is epic; in Psalm 104 it is lyric." Explain the meaning of this statement.

37. Describe the emotions of the psalmist as he beholds the works of the LORD.

38. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "Who makest the clouds Thy chariot." "He toucheth the mountains and they smoke."

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. From Kingdom to Empire

Make this essay an account of the successive steps by which David extended the boundaries of his dominions from the territory around Hebron, with which he started, until they embraced the regions as shown on the map, page 23. Include also an account of the capture of Jerusalem.

2. A Great Ruler but Unhappy Father

Draw an effective contrast between the achievements of David as conqueror and ruler, and his tribulations as father. The revolt of Absalom and the death of Absalom will, of course, be shown as his outstanding grief as a father. The feud between Absalom and Amnon and the rivalry between Solomon and Adonijah should also be included. David should be presented as an intensely human figure, in whom paternal love is stronger than considerations of state.

3. The Ark Is Brought to Jerusalem

Imagine yourself an eye-witness of the great event and write a report of it. You will describe the procession headed by David and the populace that participated in the festivities. But the essay should also reveal the vast importance of Jerusalem in the history of the Jewish people and of mankind at large. This you can do by imagining a prophet addressing a group of the people and speaking of the future glory of Jerusalem which he sees in his vision.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. A fine portrait of David as a master of men, successfully attuned to the character of his people, but with powerful spiritual impulses at work within him, will be found in "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes, pp. 156–180 (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924).

2. The chapter on David in Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz (pp. 125–155) will help to fill out the picture of his reign (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891).

TOPIC EIGHT

Solomon the Magnificent

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. Solomon's reign was one of splendor and peace. He reaped what his great father had sown. He became famous for extraordinary wisdom. Later ages surrounded him and his reign with wonders and legends. Nevertheless, he possessed some serious faults. He loved power, pomp, and luxury too much. Like the Oriental autocrat he was, he began his reign by ridding himself of his former opponents. Among those he ordered executed were Adonijah and old Joab.

Lights and Shadows

He then set up a firm and well-organized government. His commander-in-chief was Benaiah. He strengthened his army with horses and chariots as well as cavalry. His high priest was Zadok. His minister of finance was Adoniram. For taxation purposes, the country was divided into twelve districts with an officer over each one. Every year each district furnished a month's supplies to the royal household. The system, of course, was not popular. At various points he fortified cities and established military posts as centers of local administration.

Solomon's Government

Solomon's coffers and warehouses were filled from other sources also. Commerce, both by land and sea, flourished. He collected toll for the use of his roads. With the help of the Phoenicians he built a large fleet. The luxuries of the Far East began to flow into Jerusalem.

His Great Wealth

§ 2. Solomon, however, unlike his father, was no warrior. He lost Damascus in the north and most of Edom in the south. But he held the port of Ezion-geber.

Solomon No Warrior

He maintained his power through alliances. One of his allies

was Hiram, king of Tyre, the friend of his father. Another was the Egyptian Pharaoh. Solomon married a daughter of the Pharaoh and received the city of Gezer in southern Palestine as dowry. He married also many other foreign princesses. His foreign wives brought their idolatrous cults into Jerusalem. They incited his love of pomp and splendor.

His Foreign Wives

§ 3. Solomon proceeded to fortify and beautify his capital. He completed the wall around Jerusalem which had been left unfinished by his father. On Mount Zion he built a cluster of edifices including palaces, a Hall of Justice, an arsenal, and other structures. He was assisted by Phoenician craftsmen furnished by Hiram, king of Tyre. The work required a vast amount of materials and labor. Solomon compelled the Canaanites and even many of the Israelites to labor for him.

Solomon's Buildings

The most important and most magnificent of Solomon's edifices was the Temple. Eventually, the Temple became the rallying point of the nation. It was an imposing structure surrounded by a large court. In this court stood the Brazen Altar, where sacrifices were offered. The Temple proper consisted of the *Hechal* or Holy Place and the *Debir* or Holy of Holies. The Ark of the Covenant was lodged in the *Debir*. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies and even he could do so only on the Day of Atonement.

The Temple

On the completion of the Temple, a grand ceremony of dedication took place. It was attended by a vast concourse from all over the land. Solomon's dedication address is memorable. It is characterized by a tolerance for all nations and by a sublime conception of the Deity.

The Dedication

§ 4. We pause a moment in our story to acquaint ourselves with the manner of life developed by the children of Israel. They had by now become a nation of farmers, cultivating grain fields, vineyards and orchards. Out of this farming life sprang their ideas, their songs, their proverbs and parables.

Farming

Together with farming went shepherding. This was especially the case in Judah where the country was better adapted for it. The life of the shepherd also plays its part in the thought and literature of the people.

Shepherding

Houses, implements, clothing and other necessities were provided by each family for itself. Later there arose artisans who devoted themselves each one to a single craft. But the principal artisan was really the housewife. She is glorified in the Book of Proverbs as the "woman of valor."

Manufacturing

Shepherds lived solitary lives. The farmer folk lived in villages. They lived a rich and eager social life. The Sabbath, the feasts and festivals were occasions for family reunions and other gatherings. The elders, or heads of families, were also the judges. There was practical economic equality, and, therefore, social equality.

Social Life

Social life was, of course, intimately bound up with religion. Every gathering was not only for feasting, but for sacrifice and worship. Every agricultural festival—Passover, Shabuoth, Succoth—acquired religious and historic significance. There were, of course, vestiges of idolatry beside the worship of the One God. It was against these that the "Sons of the Prophets" fought and preached.

Religious Life

§ 5. Despite the peace and plenty that marked the reign of Solomon, there was also a good deal of discontent. A certain Jeroboam, encouraged by the prophet Ahijah, attempted to stir up a rebellion among the northern tribes. He failed and had to flee to Egypt. There he was welcomed by a new Pharaoh who now sat on Egypt's throne.

The Rebel Jeroboam

The causes for discontent were many, and it existed in various quarters. The prophets and their followers resented Solomon's tolerance of the idol-worship of his foreign wives. The people generally were dissatisfied with the forced labor that the King laid upon them. They also found the taxes too high. Their king, they believed, paid too much for the help he got from Hiram of Tyre. Moreover, Ephraim and the other northern tribes believed that Solomon was favoring Judah at their expense. Solomon did not take the trouble to allay the discontent. He lived in the midst of his brilliant court and did not mingle with his people.

Causes of Discontent

Except for Jeroboam's quickly suppressed attempt, however, there were no outbreaks in the reign of Solomon. The nation was dazzled by his splendor and fame. From foreign lands came those who were eager to witness his wisdom and glory. Among them was the Queen

Visit of the Queen of Sheba

of Sheba. What she saw exceeded even the reports she had heard.

Solomon's reign came to an end with his death in 933 B.C.E. He was a great king despite his shortcomings. His was a brilliant reign. He is remembered principally for his wisdom and magnificence.

A Brilliant Reign

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Solomon Establishes His Throne*

1. What was the general character of Solomon's reign?
2. What quality is he most celebrated for? Give two traditional stories associated with it.
3. What is the significance of the phrase "Every man under his vine and every man under his fig-tree"?
4. Name two faults in the character of Solomon.
5. How did Solomon secure himself against possible rivals?
6. Name three of his chief ministers and state their functions.
7. Who were the *nizabim* and what were their duties?
8. Why was the system of which the *nizabim* were a part so unpopular?
9. What other sources of revenue did Solomon have?
10. Describe Solomon's sea-going commerce.
11. What were his "store-cities"?
12. How did he improve his fighting forces?

§ 2. *Solomon's Foreign Relations*

13. How does Solomon figure as a warrior?
14. What losses of territory did he sustain?
15. Why was it important for him to keep the port of Ezion-geber?
16. Who was Hiram, and what were the relations between him and Solomon?
17. Sketch briefly the history of Egypt from the Exodus to Solomon.
18. What advantages did Solomon derive from his alliance with Egypt?

19. What disadvantage lay in his practice of marrying foreign princesses?

20. What was the effect of these foreign influences on Solomon?

§ 3. *The Temple and Other Buildings*

21. How did Solomon transform Jerusalem?

22. How did he fortify it?

23. In what ways did Hiram, king of Tyre, assist Solomon to carry out his building program?

24. Name the different kinds of material Solomon required and tell how he obtained them.

25. What was the Hall of Justice?

26. What was the House of the Forest of Lebanon?

27. Why was the Temple the most important of Solomon's structures?

28. Describe the Temple, referring to the Court, the Brazen Altar, the bronze pillars, the *Hechal,* the Holy of Holies, the shew-bread and the Ark of the Covenant.

29. What prohibitions with respect to the Holy of Holies emphasize its supreme sanctity?

30. Describe the dedication of the Temple, referring to its duration, the sacrifices, the attendance, etc.

31. What sentiment regarding strangers did Solomon express in his dedication address?

32. What is remarkable about the conception of the Deity to which he gave expression?

§ 4. *The People's Manner of Life*

33. What fundamental change had occurred in the economic life of the people?

34. Describe the life of the farmer, mentioning the different crops he cultivated, how he plowed, harvested, etc.

35. Describe the life of the shepherd, referring to its dangers, hardships, and compensations.

36. Why was shepherding more prevalent in the south than in the north?

37. How did the life of the shepherd enter into the thoughts and ideas of the people? Illustrate.

38. What sort of houses did the people live in?

39. How did they provide themselves with tools, clothing, etc.?

40. What is the meaning of the expression "a woman of valor"?

41. What was the importance of "the gate" in the social life of the people?

42. Who were the elders? What were their functions?

43. What was the Feast of the New Moon? the Feast of Sheep Shearing?

44. Name the harvest festivals and describe the manner in which the people celebrated them.

§ 5. *A Brilliant Reign, Despite Discontent*

45. Who was Jeroboam? Give an account of his attempt to raise a rebellion.

46. Why did the Pharaoh give Jeroboam asylum in Egypt?

47. Why did the prophet Ahijah encourage the rebel?

48. What were the grievances of the prophets against Solomon?

49. Why were the people discontented?

50. Why were the northern tribes, in particular, disgruntled?

51. What, in general, was Solomon's attitude toward his people?

52. What led the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon?

53. What kind of memory did Solomon's reign leave behind?

b. LITERATURE

1. *Solomon and Adonijah*

1. Arrange the incidents of this story into a scenario or play of two acts as follows: Act I: The throne-room of King David, with Bathsheba, Nathan, Zadok and Benaiah as the leading actors. Act II: En-Rogel, with the feasting of Adonijah suddenly halted by the distant sounds of Solomon's coronation, the arrival of Jonathan, son of Abiathar, etc., the leading actors being Adonijah, Joab, Abiathar and Jonathan.

2. *Solomon's Dream*

2. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "I know not how to go out or come in." "If thou wilt walk in My ways."

3. *The Wisdom of the Young King*

3. Retell this story in your own words.

4. What is the meaning of the expression: "Her heart yearned upon her son."

4. *The Dedication of the Temple*

5. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "Have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant." "Bring his way upon his own head." "Let your heart be whole with the LORD our God."

6. What prayer does Solomon offer in behalf of the stranger?

5. *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*

7. Why has this story proved so popular?

8. What features of it are typically Oriental?

6. *Solomon and Jeroboam*

9. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "A mighty man of valor." "He slept with his fathers."

10. The prophets were fond of dramatizing their ideas. How does Ahijah dramatize his message to Jeroboam?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. DAVID THE GREAT AND SOLOMON THE MAGNIFICENT

This essay should be a comparison and contrast between the father and the son. They should be compared with respect to a) capacity for leadership; b) military ability; c) extent of the kingdom in the reign of each; d) domestic affairs during the reign of each; and e) popularity.

2. THE TEMPLE IS DEDICATED

Imagine that you attended the dedication of the Temple as the representative of a distant village, and that you are to deliver a report to the village folk who sent you. Write this report of the wonders and splendors which you have seen and heard. It should contain a description of the Temple itself as well as of the palaces and other buildings. It should refer to the army, the foreign missions, the assemblies, etc. It should include the sentiments expressed by the people as well as by the King.

3. The Nomad Turns Farmer

Reread pp. 35 to 41 of Volume One, and then read again § 4 of this Topic. Write a comparison between the two modes of life described in these pages. The greatest emphasis will, of course, have to be placed on the economic differences, but social, political and religious differences should also be included.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. An excellent picture of the life of the people in the period of David and Solomon will be found in Chapter X of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924).

2. A more extended treatment of the same important and interesting subject will be found in "The Life of the People in Biblical Times" by Max Radin (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1929).

3. Chapter IX of Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz will serve to amplify the account of Solomon's reign. (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891.)

4. "A History of Hebrew Civilization" by Alfred Bertholet is both scholarly and interesting. Book II, entitled "Israel's Civilization in Palestine," is especially recommended, and Chapter II, "Trades and Callings," will be found particularly useful in connection with this Topic. (Brentano's, New York, undated.)

TOPIC NINE

The Checkered Career of Israel

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. On Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam proceeds to Shechem to be elected king. The people petition him to redress their grievances. Rehoboam answers them with brutal arrogance. Thereupon, the northern tribes rebel and set up a separate kingdom. They choose for their king Jeroboam who had returned from Egypt.

The North Rebels and Secedes

North and south are never again to be united. The south is ordinarily referred to as the Kingdom of Judah, since it only comprised the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, of whom Judah was the more important. The north is called the Kingdom of Israel or the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes. Sometimes, also, it is spoken of as Ephraim, since the tribe of Ephraim was the most important of the ten.

Israel and Judah

Of the two, Israel possessed a larger area and greater wealth and population. Its territory was more fertile. It was further advanced in the arts of civilization. On the other hand it was in greater danger of foreign enemies. Just north of it lay Aram and, still further north, Assyria.

The Two Compared

§ 2. Jeroboam I, the first king of Israel, was hard pressed by Rehoboam, king of Judah. He was saved by the Pharaoh Shishak who invaded Judah. Shishak, it seems, overran also part of Israel. To prevent his people from going to worship in the Temple at Jerusalem, Jeroboam established idolatrous shrines at Beth-el and Dan. He

Reign of Jeroboam I (933–912 B.C.E.)

committed other religious offenses. As a result, he lost the favor of the prophets who had previously supported him.

After reigning two years, Jeroboam's son Nadab was murdered by his general Baasa. Baasa became king and continued fighting with Judah. He made an alliance with Ben-hadad, king of Aram. But the king of Judah bribed Ben-hadad who then attacked his ally.

Reign of Baasa

Baasa's son was also murdered by an officer of his. Bloody dynastic revolutions became the curse of Israel. The murderer, Zimri, was overthrown by Omri, who, after a civil war, established the most important dynasty that reigned over Israel.

Rise of Omri

§ 3. The reign of the Omri dynasty was marked by close relations with Aram and Phoenicia. Aram was generally hostile, Phoenicia generally friendly. Both were trading nations, whose merchandise, language and ideas spread over many lands. The Aramaic language eventually displaced the Hebrew also as the vernacular of the Israelites.

Aram and Phoenicia

Traces of Aramean civilization have been found in many parts of the "Fertile Crescent" and elsewhere. Their principal center, however, was west of the Euphrates in Syria, with Damascus as their chief city. The Arameans are believed to have introduced the alphabet into many lands. This alphabet they are thought to have borrowed from the Phoenicians.

The Arameans

The Phoenicians dwelt in a series of cities along the coast of Syria. The principal ones were Tyre and Sidon. Each city was for the most part an independent kingdom. The Lebanon Mountains and Lebanon Valley separated them from the Arameans.

The Phoenicians

From these cities they sent their merchant ships to all the coasts of the Mediterranean. They even got as far as Britain. They were the most daring traders of the ancient world. Their principal manufactures were textiles, dyes, glassware and articles of metal. From other lands they brought back grain, wine and oil, as well as wool, spices, jewels, etc.

Daring Traders

The Phoenicians introduced commerce and luxury into Israel. They also introduced the worship of Baal and Astarte. Their

The Menace of the Phoenicians

religion threatened to destroy the religion of Israel. The danger became acute under the Omri dynasty. It was then that the first great prophets arose in Israel.

§ 4. In the history of Israel, the reign of Omri was one of the most important. He built the city of Samaria which became the permanent capital of his kingdom. He established peace with Judah. He subdued the Philistines and the Moabites. The Arameans, however, proved too strong for him and imposed heavy terms upon him. With the Phoenicians he established an alliance, and his son Ahab married the Phoenician princess Jezebel.

Reign of Omri (887–876 B.C.E.)

Ahab succeeded his father but the real ruler was Jezebel. She brought her idols and priests into her adopted country, aiming to displace the religion of the Israelites. With wealth and luxury on the increase, the new worship gained headway. Ahab let his wife do as she pleased.

Ahab and Jezebel

She met with determined opposition, however, from the prophets. In Israel they were numerous and well organized. With them were many Nazirites. With them also, were the Rechabites, a community that adhered, from religious motives, to the nomad way of life. Jezebel hunted the prophets and treated them with merciless cruelty.

The Prophets Oppose Jezebel

The great prophet Elijah now appears on the scene. He predicts a three year drought, and his prophecy is duly fulfilled. On Mount Carmel he puts the priests of Baal to shame and demonstrates the power of God. Compelled to flee from Jezebel, he reaches Mount Horeb where God speaks to him in "the still small voice." He is charged with the mission of warring relentlessly against Ahab and his house.

Elijah and his Deeds

Elijah again appears before Ahab to denounce him. Ahab and Jezebel had committed a serious crime. Ahab had desired to obtain possession of the vineyard of one Naboth. Jezebel trumped up a false charge of treason against the man and he was stoned to death. Elijah predicted Ahab's doom to his face.

He Pronounces Doom on Ahab

Before vanishing from the scene, Elijah appoints Elisha son

of Shaphat as his successor. Elijah's fame continued to grow. Later generations looked upon him as Israel's special guardian, and forerunner of the Messiah.

The Fame of Elijah

§ 5. The Arameans were Ahab's principal enemy. He defeated them twice and compelled Ben-hadad II, king of Damascus to accept hard terms. Ahab also joined in a general coalition against Assyria. He met his death in a third war against the Arameans in which he was assisted by Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.

Ahab's Wars and Death (853 B.C.E.)

Jehoram, Ahab's son, led an expedition against Mesha, king of Moab. Mesha had rebelled, refusing to pay the tribute which Omri had imposed on Moab. Jehoshaphat of Judah joined the king of Israel. The allies devastated Moab, but the campaign was indecisive.

Jehoram Invades Moab

Phoenician idolatry still flourished in Israel. The prophets, led by Elisha, continued their struggle against it. Soon came the end of Jehoram and the house of Omri. Jehu, the commander of the army, was anointed by one of the prophets. He left Ramoth-gilead, which the Israelite army was besieging, and proceeded to Jezreel. There he slew Jehoram and Jezebel. He also slew Ahab's other sons, as well as the priests of Baal. Thus the house of Omri was completely wiped out.

House of Omri Destroyed by Jehu (843 B.C.E.)

§ 6. Jehu and his son Jehoahaz were sorely pressed by their enemies, especially Aram. Hazael, king of Damascus, overran the Transjordan regions with blood and fire. His successor, Ben-hadad III, beseiged Samaria. Israel was isolated. All her enemies assailed her.

Israel Brought to Low Pass under Jehu

The tide turned when, under Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the power of Aram was broken by Assyria. Jehoash defeated Ben-hadad III. He also fought against and defeated Amaziah, king of Judah, who had challenged him. He took Jerusalem and pillaged it. He was followed by his son, the great king Jeroboam II.

Restored under Jehoash (800–785 B.C.E.)

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *The North Secedes*

1. Why did Rehoboam go to Shechem?
2. What mistake did he make in dealing with the people?
3. What is the meaning of the expression "My little finger is thicker than my father's loins"?
4. Why did the people stone Adoniram to death?
5. What momentous result followed upon the revolt of the north?
6. By what name is the kingdom of the south known, and why?
7. By what names is the kingdom of the north known, and why?
8. Compare Judah and Israel with respect to (*a*) size; (*b*) population; (*c*) wealth; (*d*) exposure to enemies.

§ 2. *Jeroboam and Baasa*

9. What was Jeroboam's principal foreign problem?
10. Why did the king of Egypt come to his rescue?
11. What was Jeroboam's principal internal problem?
12. Why did he forfeit the favor of the prophets?
13. Describe the downfall of Jeroboam's dynasty.
14. What foreign policy did Baasa attempt, and with what success?
15. Describe the downfall of Baasa's dynasty.
16. Who was Omri and how did he rise to the throne?

§ 3. *Aram and Phoenicia*

17. What was the most lasting mark that the Arameans left on the Israelites?
18. Where was the principal Aramean center and what were its relations with Israel?
19. In what respect did the Arameans resemble the Phoenicians?
20. Why did the Phoenicians build their cities along the coast?

21. Draw a map of Aram and Phoenicia, locating the following: the Euphrates, the Leontes and Orontes Rivers, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Mountains, Mount Hermon, Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, Acco and Berytus.

22. What is the origin of the word "Phoenicia"?

23. Give an account of the Phoenicians as merchants, telling how they traded, with whom and in what commodities.

24. Give an account of the Phoenicians as colonizers, naming their principal colony and locating it.

25. Why were the Phoenicians a menace to Israel, despite the fact that the relations between the two were friendly?

26. Describe the Phoenician worship, naming their two principal idols.

27. How was the Phoenician danger warded off?

§ 4. *Elijah*

28. Discuss the reign of Omri, referring to his relations with Judah, his relations with Phoenicia, his wars, and his new capital.

29. How did the marriage of Ahab with Jezebel affect religious conditions in Israel?

30. What economic changes favored Jezebel's attempts to introduce the Phoenician idolatry into Israel?

31. How did Ahab look upon Jezebel's doings?

32. Why were the prophets her "natural and implacable enemies"?

33. Who were the Nazirites?

34. "The Rechabites represented a protest not only against idolatry but also against the luxury and idle life of the cities." Explain the meaning of this statement.

35. How did Elijah "strike terror into the hearts of idolators and evil-doers"?

36. Tell how Elijah confounded the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel.

37. How did God reveal himself to Elijah at Mount Horeb?

38. What mission is laid upon Elijah on this occasion?

39. Tell the story of Naboth's vineyard.

40. How does Elijah appoint his successor?

41. How does Elijah figure in the beliefs and legends of the Jews?

§ 5. *End of the House of Omri*

42. Give an account of Ahab's wars against the Arameans.

43. What danger menaced all the nations round about and how did they act to meet it?

44. Describe the manner of Ahab's death.

45. Why is the Moabite Stone an interesting "document"?

46. Give an account of Jehoram's expedition against Mesha.

47. Who was Jehu and what sort of a man was he?

48. What rôle did the prophets play in the rise of Jehu?

49. Describe the manner of Jehoram's death.

50. What is the meaning of the expression "the still small voice"?

§ 6. *Decline and Restoration*

51. Why did Israel, in the reign of Jehu, find herself isolated?

52. What did Jehu hope for in his wars against Aram?

53. What condition did Israel find herself in in the reign of Jehu's son?

54. What enabled Jehoash to gain the upper hand over Aram?

55. Give an account of the war between Jehoash and Amaziah.

56. What indicates that there still existed a feeling of kinship between Israel and Judah?

b LITERATURE

1. *The Revolt of the North*

1. Explain the origin and meaning of the cry: "To your tents, O Israel!"

2. What incident illustrates "the dictatorship of the prophet"?

2. *Elijah Victorious*

3. Why is Obadiah afraid to inform Ahab of Elijah's appearance?

4. How did the prophets of Baal endeavor to bring fire down upon the altar?

5. What incident represents the climax of this narrative?

6. What is the meaning of the expression: "He girded up his loins"?

3. *The Still Small Voice*

7. Explain the meaning of "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of Hosts."

8. What were the various natural phenomena that preceded "the still small voice"?

9. How is God's presence in "the still small voice" allegorically interpreted?

4. *Naboth's Vineyard*

10. "Elijah is the embodied conscience of his people." Explain this statement with special reference to this story.

11. Contrast the characters of Ahab and Jezebel.

5. *The Campaign against Moab*

12. What does this story reveal concerning the rôle of the prophet in public affairs?

13. Why does Elisha say: "What have I to do with thee?" to the king of Israel?

6. *Jehu the Avenger*

14. Recount the manner of Jehoram's death.

15. Recount the manner of Jezebel's death.

7. *A Proud King Humbled*

16. What is the chronicler's attitude toward "the high places"?

17. Explain the expression: "Let us look one another in the face."

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. THE NORTH HAS BROKEN AWAY

Let this be a letter which you, a resident of Shechem, are writing to a cousin of yours in Hebron. The secession of the north has just taken place. You were present when Rehoboam gave his foolish answer to the people, and you witnessed the events that followed. Recount them in the letter. Then express your anxiety for the future. Will you and your cousin now have to be enemies? Try to weave into the letter a comparison between the two kingdoms.

2. Dangerous Enemies and Dangerous Friends

This should be an account of the relations between Israel, Aram and Phoenicia. The Arameans are, of course, the dangerous enemies and the Phoenicians the dangerous friends. Show by illustration how the friendship of Phoenicia was a menace to Israel. Recount also the wars of Aram against Israel.

3. The Strange Prophet Elijah

Write as dramatic an account as you can of the adventurous career of Elijah. Follow him in his sudden appearances before the King and people, and in his flights into solitude where he undergoes great spiritual experiences. Show how the character and deeds of Elijah were bound to make a powerful appeal to the imagination of the people.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. Read the article "Elijah in Rabbinical Literature" in the Jewish Encyclopedia for an understanding of the immense place which the great prophet assumed in the imagination and hopes of the Jewish people. (Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1906.)

2. A brief but vivid account of the checkered career of Israel will be found in Chapter XI of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes. (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924.)

3. To fill out the picture of the period read also chapter X of Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz. (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891.)

TOPIC TEN

The Downfall of Israel

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. For power and prosperity, the reign of Jeroboam II over Israel recalls the days of Solomon. Jeroboam captured Damascus, overran Aram and subdued Moab. He restored the north and east boundaries of David's empire. Assyria was moving down again, but was not yet a serious menace.

Brilliant Reign of Jeroboam II (785–745 B.C.E.)

We stop to note that important economic changes had occurred in Israel — and, for that matter, in Judah also. The cities, with the growth of commerce, had grown in wealth and size. But now there had risen up a class of rich and a class of poor. The rich, few in numbers, were the big land holders, the bankers and merchants. The poor were the artisans or craftsmen, and laborers. The poor were often in debt or enslaved to the rich who showed them little mercy.

Economic Changes: The Cities

In the country, many small farms had become large single estates. The Jubilee Year was not observed. The poor farmers were in debt to the rich. Often they forfeited their holdings and went to swell the ranks of the poor in the cities.

The Country

With economic inequalities, social inequalities also came into existence. The rich lived idle and luxurious lives. They enjoyed special privileges. The judges often favored their side regardless of the claims of justice.

Social Inequalities

Luxury and special privilege also encouraged idolatry, for the idols were not concerned with justice. The God of Moses, however, did insist on justice. He spoke through the great prophets. It is the prophets who make the history of Israel and Judah different from that of

Rôle of the Prophets

the other nations of the period. It is they who make that history important for mankind to-day.

§ 2. Amos, the first of the "literary" prophets, makes his appearance in the reign of Jeroboam II. The "literary" prophets are so called because their words have come down to us in writing. There was widespread education in Israel and Judah. Other books besides those of the prophets were in circulation.

The "Literary" Prophets

Amos was a shepherd from Tekoa in Judah. He left his native place to prophesy in Israel, because idolatry and social evils were more rampant in the north than in the south. He appears in Beth-el, the religious center of Israel, and denounces the rich oppressors and even the high-priest Amaziah. He foresees and foretells Israel's downfall.

Amos Goes North to Prophesy

Amos exhibits all the qualities of the greatest of the prophets. He is absolutely fearless. He is moved by a burning passion for social justice. He hates wickedness and oppression. He considers sacrifice unimportant. He has a boundless pity for the poor and oppressed. He sees the approach of doom, but he also sees deliverance in the distant future. And he speaks in words of extraordinary power and beauty.

The Spirit of the Prophet

§ 3. In the years of Israel's approaching doom, Hosea, another great prophet lifts up his voice. Hosea is an Israelite. His language has the elegance of a man of high culture. He pleads with Israel to give up idolatry and return to his God. For God loves Israel despite his faithlessness. But he sees the approaching disaster. He sees the rulers confused and vacillating between Assyria and Egypt.

Hosea the Pleader

Hosea calls upon the individual man to know God. He pleads for the knowledge that comes from the heart. His religious temperament is that of the mystic. His final words speak comfort and hope. He visions a future when Israel will be reunited with God in perfect love.

Hosea the Comforter

§ 4. Assyria started as the city of Assur on the Tigris River about 2800 B.C.E. The Assyrians were Semites. For about 1500 years, they were kept, for the most part, in subjection by the Babylonians and Hittites. But they were a rugged people and constant fighting made them into splendid soldiers.

Beginnings of Assyria

The principal Assyrian god was Assur, god of the sun and of war. The principal goddess was Ishtar, who was the same as the Phoenician Astarte. The heavenly bodies also were worshiped. The priests practiced astrology, or the art of foretelling the future by the movements of the stars.

Religion of Assyria

About 1300 B.C.E. the Assyrians began to expand. They swept across Mesopotamia toward the west and overran Babylonia to the south. About 1100 B.C.E. they reached the Mediterranean. Now they were barred by Phoenicia and Aram. Other nations also, including Israel, Judah, and Egypt joined from time to time to stop the Assyrians. For three centuries Assyria was held in check.

First Period of Conquest

Dynastic troubles and rebellions as well as resistance kept the Assyrians back. But in 745 B.C.E. Tiglath-pileser III seized the throne. Under him the second Assyrian empire started on its career of conquest. He conquered Media, Phoenicia and Aram. He organized his vast empire in a manner which made his authority effective over every part of it.

Second Period of Conquest

The Assyrians became supreme in the art of warfare. They were masters especially of the art of besieging cities. They were impressive builders and sculptors, but only in war did they show originality.

Masters of War

It was the fixed policy of the Assyrians to practice terror and torture. They adopted all the known horrors and invented new ones. One of their policies was to deport the inhabitants, especially the influential inhabitants, of conquered provinces. In the places left vacant, they often introduced foreign colonists.

Terror, Torture and Deportation

§ 5. Violent dynastic changes followed one another in rapid succession in Israel despite the growing menace of Assyria. Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II was slain by Shallum, who, in turn, was slain by Menahem. The latter reigned for eight years. His son, Pekahiah, was slain by Pekah son of Remaliah.

Dynastic Revolutions

Two parties arose in Israel, one favoring submission to Assyria, the other advocating an alliance with Egypt against Assyria. Menahem was compelled to pay a large tribute to the Assyrian conqueror Tiglath-pileser III. Pekah son of Remaliah, however, revolted, and entered

Enter the Assyrians

into an alliance with King Rezin of Damascus. Both made war on King Ahaz of Judah who had refused to join them. Ahaz called on the Assyrians for help. They came, captured Damascus, slew King Rezin, and devastated Gilead and Galilee.

Pekah was slain by Hoshea who seized the throne. At first pro-Assyrian, Hoshea veered about and stopped paying tribute.

Fall of Samaria

He was captured by Shalmaneser IV who then laid siege to Samaria. After a siege of three years, the city fell in 722 B.C.E. to Sargon, the new Assyrian Emperor. The leading inhabitants were deported.

Two years later Sargon put down a new revolt. Then he poured a host of foreign settlers into Samaria. Eventually, they

"The Lost Ten Tribes"

mixed with the natives and came to be known as Samaritans. The Israelites who were led away vanished from history. They are spoken of as "the Lost Ten Tribes."

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Economic and Social Inequalities*

1. Why does the reign of Jeroboam II recall the days of Solomon?

2. What enabled Jeroboam II to gain the upper hand over Aram?

3. Describe the economic changes that had taken place in the cities.

4. Describe the economic changes that had taken place in the countryside.

5. Describe the manner in which the rich lived.

6. Explain how it came about that the poor found themselves at the mercy of the rich.

7. Why were the rich inclined to idolatry rather than to the worship of the One God?

8. Were the economic and social conditions described in this section in existence in Israel and Judah only?

9. Why, then, is the history of Israel and Judah different from that of other nations? Explain fully.

§ 2. *Amos*

10 Why did Amos leave his native land to prophesy in Israel?

11. What made Beth-el a place of importance in the northern kingdom?

12. What were the evils against which Amos preached?

13. What terrifying events did he predict?

14. Why does he scorn the people's sacrifices?

15. Why does he insist Israel must be better than the other nations?

16. What effect do his words produce on his hearers?

17. Why does he continue his denunciations in spite of the dangers he incurs?

18. What is meant by the term "literary prophets"?

19. What enabled the prophets to make themselves understood by the people?

§ 3. *Hosea*

20. In what period of Israel's history does Hosea appear?

21. Compare Hosea with Amos with respect to (*a*) country of birth, (*b*) education, (*c*) general temperament.

22. Why does Hosea consider idolatry the worst of all sins?

23. Why does he scoff at the rulers of Israel?

24. What is Hosea's final message?

25. What is the meaning of the statement that Hosea was "a good deal of a mystic"?

§ 4. *Assyria*

26. Of what race were the Assyrians? Give an account of Assyria's beginnings.

27. How did the Assyrians come to develop their martial spirit and ability?

28. Describe the religion of the Assyrians, mentioning the principal gods and the practice of astrology.

29. Why did astrology serve as the basis for the science of astronomy?

30. What circumstances enabled the Assyrians to set out on their first period of conquest?

31. What progress did they make in this first period?

32. What prevented them from continuing their conquests?

33. What internal troubles held them in check?

34. Who was Pul?

35. Point out the extent of the empire created by Tiglath-pileser III.

36. Describe the Assyrian military machine.

37. "Terror was one of Assyria's principal weapons." Explain this statement.

38. Explain the Assyrian policy of deportation.

§ 5. *The Fall of Israel*

39. What reveals the demoralization that existed in the government of Israel?

40. Describe the two parties that arose in Israel on the issue of the foreign policy.

41. What policy was followed by Menahem?

42. What policy was followed by Pekah?

43. What was the consequence of Pekah's war against Judah?

44. What policy was first followed by Hosea?

45. Why did he change this policy?

46. Describe the siege of Samaria.

47. Who was Sargon? How did he treat the people of the fallen city?

48. Explain the origin of the Samaritans.

49. What is meant by "The Lost Ten Tribes"?

b. LITERATURE

A. Amos

EVOLUTION OF PROPHECY

1. What led to the rise of soothsayers?

2. Who was the *roeh?* Who were the "sons of the prophets"?

3. Name four prophets who figure before Amos.

4. Explain how the Baal cult came to be practiced among the Hebrews.

5. Give the reasons why the prophets opposed this cult.

6. What wrong conclusion must the reader of the Prophets guard against?

1. *An Arraignment of Israel*

7. What were the transgressions which Amos charges against Israel?

8. Explain the expression: "I will make it creak under you."

2. *Wicked Samaria*

9. Explain the logical connection between "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" and "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"

10. Pick out five lines in this passage that shed light on social conditions in Samaria.

3. *The Day of the Lord*

11. How does the prophet describe the greed of the merchants?

12. Explain the meaning of the lines: "I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head."

4. *Israel Doomed*

13. Explain the parable of the plumbline.

14. Give the two lines that sum up the teachings of Amos.

B. Hosea

1. *Unfaithful Israel*

15. Point out the religious errors of the people which this passage reveals.

2. *Israel's Guilt and Punishment*

16. Explain fully what Hosea means by the statement "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

17. Give the two lines that sum up the teachings of Hosea.

18. What are the sins which the prophet charges against the priests?

3. *God's Love for Israel*

19. Explain the meaning of the line "My compassions are kindled together."

4. *New Betrothal*

20. How does the prophet picture the ideal relations between God and Israel?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. Social Justice and the Prophets

Describe the economic and social abuses which came into existence in Israel and Judah. Were those evils to be found in Israel and Judah only? What is meant by social justice (see Vol. 1 p. 139)? What did the prophets have to say about the extravagance of the rich, the sufferings of the poor, the perversion of justice? What makes the prophets interesting and important for modern times also?

2. Amos and Hosea

Compare and contrast the two prophets. Point out the difference in their origin and station in life. Dwell upon their difference in temperament. With regard to their ideas, point out what each of them had to say on idolatry, sacrifice, social justice and the approaching catastrophe. "Hosea is a good deal of a mystic" (p. 198). Explain the meaning of this statement.

3. Assyria or Egypt?

Reproduce an imaginary conversation or debate between Perez, a partisan of Assyria, and Obed a partisan of Egypt. Each of them, of course, tries to prove that Israel's safety lies in adopting his policy. Perez cites instances from past history of Egypt's perfidy. Obed points to Assyria's imperialism and cruelty. You must try to balance the arguments of both as evenly as possible.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. In connection with the section on economic changes, Chapter IX of "The Life of the People in Biblical Times" by Max Radin will be found interesting and useful. (The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1929.)

2. Pp. 194–222 ("Trades and Callings") of "A History of Hebrew Civilization" by Alfred Bertholet will be found even more scholarly and interesting. (Brentano's, New York, undated.)

3. Chapter XII of Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz will help to fill out the picture of the period. (The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891.)

TOPIC ELEVEN

Judah and Isaiah

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. Little Judah was now the keeper of the destiny of the Jewish people. There the house of David, with only one short break, continued to reign. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was, as we saw, prevented from reconquering the north by an invasion from Egypt. The Pharaoh Shishak even encamped against Jerusalem. Rehoboam was compelled to buy him off. His son Abijah, who reigned only three years, continued fighting against Israel.

Rehoboam and Abijah (933–915 B.C.E.)

Abijah's son, Asa, unlike his two predecessors, labored to stamp out idolatry. He also endeavored to make the Temple in Jerusalem the only recognized place of worship. War with Israel continued. Asa was saved from defeat by bribing the Arameans to attack Baasa, king of Israel. He also routed a horde of invaders from Africa.

Reign of Asa (915–875 B.C.E.)

Asa's son, Jehoshaphat, established peace with Ahab of Israel. His son Jehoram married Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Jehoshaphat, like his father, fought against idolatry. He joined Israel in an expedition against Moab. His son Jehoram, however, influenced by his wife Athaliah, permitted the Phoenician idols to flourish in Judah. Jehoram's son, Ahaziah, met his death at the hands of Jehu's followers.

Jehoshaphat Jehoram and Ahaziah (875–843 B.C.E.)

On the news of his death, his mother, Athaliah, slaughtered his children and seized the throne. For six years there was a break in the house of David. But one of the children, the infant Jehoash, was saved. Athaliah, of course, practiced the idol-worship of

Athaliah, Daughter of Jezebel

Phoenicia with a corps of Baal priests and a high priest of her own.

Six years later, with the support of the guards, the boy Jehoash was anointed king. Athaliah was slain. The house of David was restored. Jehoash reigned for nearly forty years. One of his important acts was to repair the Temple. The Arameans invaded Judah in his reign and Jehoash was compelled to buy them off. The Edomites rebelled and defied Judah from their stronghold, Joktheel.

Reign of Jehoash (837–798 B.C.E.)

Jehoash fell a victim to assassins. His son Amaziah defeated the Edomites and captured their fortress. But, in his pride, he challenged Israel and was defeated. He too was assassinated, and was followed by his son, Uzziah.

Amaziah, Victim of His Own Pride (798–780 B.C.E.)

§ 2. Like that of his contemporary, Jeroboam II in Israel, Uzziah's reign was long and prosperous. Between the two kingdoms there was peace. Uzziah defeated his enemies. He restored the southern boundary as it was in the reign of David.

Brilliant Reign of Uzziah (780–740 B.C.E.)

After Uzziah, his son Jotham reigned for five years. Then came Jotham's son, Ahaz (735–720 B.C.E.). Ahaz, refusing to join the alliance against Assyria, was attacked by Israel and Aram. Jerusalem was besieged. Ahaz sent costly gifts to Tiglath-pileser and begged for help. The Assyrians attacked Aram, and Jerusalem was saved.

Ahaz Obtains Help from Assyria

In the reign of Ahaz came the fall of Samaria. The news filled Judah with sorrow. The Judeans remembered that, after all, the Israelites were their brothers. They remembered how the Judean captives taken by Pekah had been freed and sent home. Moreover, the safety of Judah depended on the whim and policy of the Assyrians. There was fear in Jerusalem as well as sorrow.

Jerusalem Grieves over Samaria

Ahaz was a vassal of Assyria. To flatter his suzerain he introduced the idolatry of Assyria into the Temple. An Assyrian altar and statues of horses, symbolizing the war god, were set up there by the King's command. Ahaz even sacrificed his own son to Moloch.

Ahaz Brings in Assyrian Idolatry

Hand in hand with idolatry went social and economic vices and evils. Those were the evils that existed among all the nations.

Oppression and Injustice in Judah

The rich lived idle and profligate lives. They oppressed the poor and perverted justice. There were false prophets who flattered the evil-doers instead of denouncing them.

But in Judah also the voice of the true prophet rises up. It is the voice which makes the history of Judah "different." The

The Age of Isaiah

age of Ahaz is better known as the age of Isaiah, the greatest of the great prophets.

§ 3. The words and deeds of Isaiah have come down to us in the first thirty-nine chapters of the book which goes by his name.

Isaiah

His active career covers the period from 740 to 700 B.C.E. The account of his initiation as prophet is of sublime and stirring beauty.

Isaiah is first of all a prophet. He possesses the courage of the prophet to an extraordinary degree. He expresses himself

As Prophet

fearlessly on the problems of the day, as well as on the private sins and vices of the people. He denounces the oppressors of the poor, belittles their sacrifices, and calls on them to "seek justice and relieve the oppressed." He prophesies a calamitous "day of the LORD." But for the remote future, "the end of days," he sees visions of everlasting peace and justice. He speaks in parables and in a polished language of incomparable beauty.

Isaiah was also a statesman. His advice was frequently sought by the ruler. In times of national crisis he gave the people an

As Statesman

example of courage and confidence. When Israel and Aram were attacking Judah, he appeared before the king and counselled calm and faith. But he was opposed to appealing to Assyria for help. He knew such an appeal would lead to vassalage.

§ 4. Another great prophet in the reign of Ahaz was Micah of Moresheth. Micah was a peasant who hated the city. There is

Micah

something in him of the frenzy of the primitive prophets. He sees the city as the home of injustice and vice. Samaria has deserved her fate. Jerusalem, too, is doomed. But, in the end, justice shall triumph, for justice is the cause of God.

Like the other prophets, Micah scorns and derides sacrifice.

Shall a man do evil and then atone for it by sacrifice? No! cries Micah. The LORD desires only that a man "shall do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with his God." This doctrine represents the highest moral pinnacle that man may attain. It is the spiritual impulse that animates all the prophets of Israel.

His Moral Grandeur

§ 5. Ahaz was followed by his son Hezekiah (720–692 B.C.E.). The youthful monarch stood under Isaiah's influence. He began with an energetic campaign to cleanse the land of idolatry. He aimed also to make the Temple the only legitimate place for sacrifice. He strengthened the capital, purified and renovated the Temple, and rededicated it. The local shrines and "high places" could not, however, be completely abolished.

Religious Policy of Hezekiah

An impressive celebration of the Passover took place in Jerusalem. The King invited those of the Israelites who still remained in the north to attend the celebration. For fourteen days there was sacrifice with music and feasting. A wave of religious zeal swept over the people.

Celebration of the Passover

Hezekiah established a well-knit, centralized government. His prime minister was a certain Shebna to whom Isaiah was strongly opposed. Shebna kept urging the King to rebel against Assyria and throw in his lot with Egypt. But Isaiah knew that the small nations were merely pawns in Egypt's hands. Isaiah wanted his country to keep out of international intrigue.

Isaiah *vs.* Shebna

In the early part of his reign, the King allowed himself to be guided by Isaiah. Hezekiah had to fight a war against Hanno, king of Gaza, who had revolted against Assyria and demanded that Judah join him. Hezekiah was victorious. Ten years later, Ashdod revolted. Isaiah appeared in the streets of Jerusalem in the guise of a captive to warn Judah against being drawn in. Again the King stayed out. But the pro-Egyptian party was very active.

Assyria or Egypt?

§ 6. The Assyrian emperor Sargon was murdered in his palace. His son Sennacherib succeeded him. Many of the subject nations believed it a good time to revolt. Ambassadors from Babylon came to Jerusalem to whom Hezekiah proudly displayed his treasures. Isaiah cen-

Judah Revolts

sured the monarch, predicting that the treasures would some day be carried into Babylon. But Judah revolted. Hezekiah stopped paying tribute. The pro-Egyptian party triumphed.

Sennacherib Victorious

Sennacherib first crushed the rebels in the east. Then he took his armies to the west. An Egyptian force that tried to stop him was defeated. By the year 701 B.C.E. the Assyrians appeared in Judah. They ravaged the land and began to ascend toward Jerusalem.

He Demands the Surrender of Jerusalem

Hezekiah offered to submit. Sennacherib first compelled him to pay an enormous fine. Then he demanded the surrender of Jerusalem. The fate of Samaria would then befall the capital of Judah. In an insolent speech, Sennacherib's emmissary, standing before the walls of Jerusalem, defied the God of Israel to defend the city.

Isaiah Defies the Enemy

Hezekiah turned to Isaiah. The prophet now rose to his greatest moral height. The Assyrians, who were only an instrument in God's hands, had defied Him! They should feel his might! He predicted they would never take Jerusalem.

Isaiah Triumphs

His prophecy was fulfilled. The Assyrian host was suddenly compelled to march against the Egyptians. It met with an overwhelming disaster, being destroyed by a pestilence. Jerusalem and Judah were saved (700 B.C.E.).

Isaiah Dominant

§ 7. Hezekiah ended his reign eight years later. The prophetic party, led by Isaiah, had the upper hand. The position of Judah was greatly enhanced.

The Vision of Isaiah

Concerning the immediate future, nevertheless, Isaiah was filled with anxiety. But his vision of the distant future, "the end of days," was glorious. That vision is illuminated by three great ideas. These ideas still dominate the hopes of the Jewish people and of a great portion of mankind. The first is the idea of "the saving remnant" to insure the continued life of the Jewish people. The second is the ideal of permanent peace among the nations. The third is the idea of the Great Deliverer, the perfect ruler or Messiah.

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *The House of David in Judah*

1. What prevented Rehoboam from reconquering the north?
2. How did Rehoboam save Jerusalem from the Egyptians?
3. What change in religious policy did his grandson Asa introduce?
4. To what position in the land did he endeavor to elevate the Temple in Jerusalem?
5. Why was this task so difficult?
6. By what means did Asa triumph against Baasa of Israel?
7. What other victory did Asa carry off?
8. What new policy with reference to Israel was introduced by Asa's son Jehoshaphat?
9. By what act was this new policy "cemented"?
10. How did the Phoenician idols find their way into Judah also?
11. How did Jehoshaphat's grandson, Ahaziah, come to his end?
12. How did Athaliah proceed when she learned of her son's death?
13. What saved the house of David from extinction?
14. Describe the religious policy introduced by Athaliah.
15. Give an account of the restoration of the house of David.
16. What events give evidence of the low state to which Judah sank in the reign of Jehoash?
17. How did Jehoash's son, Amaziah, prove his adherence to the Law of Moses?
18. What were the consequences of his inflated pride?

§ 2. *King Ahaz and Assyria*

19. Mention the principal achievements of King Uzziah.
20. What crisis did King Ahaz face?
21. How did he overcome it?
22. Why did Jerusalem grieve over the fall of Samaria?
23. What grounds for assurance did Jerusalem have with respect to her own security?

24. What reasons for alarm were there also?

25. Describe the Assyrian idolatry which Ahaz introduced.

26. Describe the social and economic evils which came into existence in Judah.

27. What is meant by "false prophets"?

28. What prevents the history of Judah from being "ordinary?"

29. Why is the period known as the age of Isaiah?

§ 3. *Isaiah*

30. Whence do we derive our knowledge of Isaiah?

31. Describe his initiation into prophecy as he himself records it.

32. What is a parable? Point out the parable contained in Isaiah's "Song of the Vineyard."

33. What did Isaiah mean by "the day of the Lord"?

34. Do you think Isaiah was popular among the rich? If not, why not?

35. Discuss Isaiah as a statesman, touching on his rôle in times of national crisis, his advice to King Ahaz with regard to Aram and Israel, and his attitude to Assyria.

36. Who were the "two tails of smoking firebrands," and what did Isaiah mean by that phrase?

§ 4. *Micah*

37. Compare Micah and Isaiah with respect to place of residence, social position and education.

38. In what way is Micah reminiscent of the prophets in the days of Saul?

39. What accounts for Micah's hatred of the city?

40. What is his attitude toward sacrifice?

41. What, according to Micah, does God require in place of sacrifice?

42. Why does he believe that justice is bound to triumph in the end?

§ 5. *Hezekiah*

43. Why did Isaiah hail the advent of King Hezekiah?

44. Discuss the religious policy of Hezekiah, referring to his

campaign against idolatry and for the centralization of the worship.

45. Why was idolatry so difficult to stamp out?

46. Describe the national Passover celebration that took place in the reign of Hezekiah.

47. Who was Shebna? Why was Isaiah opposed to him?

48. Why was Isaiah opposed to an alliance with Egypt?

49. How did Judah come to be involved in a war with Gaza?

50. Explain the strange conduct of Isaiah in appearing in the streets of Jerusalem in the garb of a captive.

§ 6. *Sennacherib and Isaiah*

51. Why was there a wave of revolt against Assyria around 705 B.C.E.?

52. Why was Isaiah displeased with Hezekiah for displaying his riches?

53. What ominous prediction did he make?

54. How did the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem triumph?

55. How did Sennacherib deal with the rebels?

56. What did Isaiah mean when he called Egypt "Arrogancy that sitteth still"?

57. Describe the treatment that Sennacherib meted out to King Hezekiah.

58. Give an account of the parley between the Assyrians and the Judeans before the walls of Jerusalem.

59. Why did Isaiah defy the Assyrians?

60. What was his prophecy concerning them?

61. Give an account of the manner in which this prophecy was fulfilled.

§ 7. *The Vision of Isaiah*

62. Why was the prophetic party now supreme?

63. What is the meaning of the expression "the end of days"?

64. Explain Isaiah's idea of "the saving remnant."

65. What is the present day importance of his vision of universal peace?

66. What is the etymological meaning of the word *Messiah?*

67. What importance did Isaiah's vision of a Messiah or "perfect ruler" acquire?

b. LITERATURE

A. Isaiah

1. *The Consecration of the Prophet*

1. Explain the meaning of the line "Make the heart of this people fat."

2. What was the cause of the fear that overcame the young Isaiah when he saw the vision?

2. *The Vineyard of the Lord*

3. Recount the parable with which Isaiah begins this address.

4. Show how the prophet applied it to the relations between God and Israel.

5. Name the different classes of evil-doers that Isaiah denounces in this oration.

3. *An Arraignment of Israel*

6. What was the boast of the arrogant Israelites that Isaiah ridicules?

7. What did "the palm-branch and rush" stand for in Isaiah's figure of speech?

8. How does Assyria's practice of deportation strengthen Isaiah's simile comparing them to a lion?

4. *The Iniquity of Jerusalem*

9. Explain the line: "They stagger but not with strong drink."

10. Explain the line: "Their fear of Me is a commandment of man learned by rote."

11. Compare Isaiah's denunciation of sacrifices with that of Amos (p. 227f.). Which do you consider stronger and why?

12. Explain the meaning of the lines: "Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water."

5. *Sennacherib's Blasphemy and Defeat*

13. Give in your own words the substance of Rab-shakeh's speech before the wall of Jerusalem.

14. Give the substance of Isaiah's defiant answer.

15. Explain the meaning of the lines: "I will put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips."

6. *Proud Assyria Denounced*

16. Explain the meaning of the line: "I have removed the bounds of the peoples."

17. Why is Assyria to be punished?

7. *"The End of Days"*

18. What two lines sum up Isaiah's conception of the rôle of Zion in his vision of "the end of days"?

19. What is the most expressive figure in which Isaiah prophesies the end of war?

20. What is the meaning of the line: "With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked"?

21. What is the meaning of the line: "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins"?

B. Micah

1. *The Doom of Samaria and Jerusalem*

22. Explain the meaning of the line: "I will make Samaria a heap in the field."

23. Point out the lines that describe the storm by which the LORD will reveal His might.

2. *Wicked Rulers and False Prophets*

24. What are the crimes with which Micah charges the rulers?

25. What crimes does he charge against the false prophets?

3. *"What Doth The Lord Require of Thee?"*

26. Repeat Micah's answer to this question.

27. In what way does Micah remind you of Hosea?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. THE HOUSE OF DAVID RESTORED

Imagine you are a resident of Jerusalem and are corresponding with a friend in Samaria. The revolution by which the boy Jehoash was proclaimed king and the house of David restored, has just taken place. Describe, as an eye-witness, all those stirring

and dramatic events: the scene in the Temple, the death of Athaliah, the rejoicing of the people, etc.

2. Jerusalem Saved

In a letter to a friend living, say, in Hebron, give an account, as an eye-witness, of what Jerusalem went through from the appearance of the Assyrians to the disaster that overtook Sennacherib. Dwell especially on the dramatic scene before the walls of Jerusalem when the Assyrian Rab-shakeh defied the Jews and their God. Emphasize the important part played in those events by Isaiah.

3. Isaiah, Statesman and Prophet

This essay should deal with Isaiah under the two aspects named. Isaiah revealed himself as statesman in his relation with King Ahaz and King Hezekiah, and especially in the stirring days when Jerusalem was threatened by Sennacherib. Indicate, also, how he stood on the question of an alliance with Assyria or Egypt. In dealing with Isaiah as prophet, emphasize his three leading ideas as set forth in § 7, p. 280 ff.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. A fine appraisal of the greatness of Isaiah will be found on pp. 355–364 of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924).

2. Chapter XIV of Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz will be found useful for filling out the picture of the period (The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891).

TOPIC TWELVE

The Downfall of Judah

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. In all periods, Jewish history reveals two major tendencies. One of them aims to remove the distinctions that make the Jews different from other peoples. The other aims to preserve them. Each tendency has produced separate parties to represent it. The principal issue over which the parties have struggled has been the question of religion.

Two Opposing Tendencies

In the reign of Hezekiah, the first tendency was upheld by the court party. Their main policy was to establish idolatry. The second tendency was upheld by the prophets and their followers, the *Anavim,* who were zealous for the worship of the One God and the observance of His Law. The failure of Sennacherib's campaign meant the victory for the prophetic party.

Court Party and *Anavim*

But the accession of Manasseh, Hezekiah's twelve-year-old son, brought the court party into power. The prophets and the *Anavim* were persecuted. Idolatry in its most hideous forms became rampant. Even the sacrifice of children to the Phoenician idol Moloch was practiced.

Reaction under Manasseh (692–638 B.C.E.)

Throughout the fifty-four years of his reign, Manasseh paid tribute to Assyria. Assyrian power remained undiminished. After waging successful campaigns in other quarters, Sennacherib was murdered by his sons. The new ruler Esarhaddon invaded Egypt and in 671

Assyria Supreme

B.C.E. captured Memphis. He is reported to have taken Manasseh captive and then released him.

Amon, who followed his father Manasseh, was the victim of assassins. He had reigned less than a year. The people punished the slayers, and made Amon's eight-year-old son Josiah king.

Accession of Josiah (638 B.C.E.)

§ 2. Assyria begins tottering to her fall. Shortly after Esarhaddon, Egypt regained her independence. From the various frontiers, new hordes appeared and attacked Assyria. From the south came the Chaldeans, from the east the Medes, from the north the savage Scythians. Assyria's wealth and manpower were becoming exhausted. The Scythian horsemen broke through into the Mediterranean provinces. They swept down the coast to the very border of Egypt.

Assyria at Bay

The prophet Nahum sees the doom of Assyria approaching. He raises a song of triumph in anticipation. He sees in his vivid fancy the enemies of Assyria raging through the streets of Nineveh. Assyria is being punished for her wickedness.

The Prophet Nahum

The prophet Zephaniah, a Jerusalemite, sees the dread "day of the LORD" on the way not only for Assyria, but for the other wicked nations, including Judah. He denounces the idolatry and corruption of his own land. The savage foe is the instrument of God. Like the prophets of the previous century, however, Zephaniah sees also a vision of eventual restoration.

The Prophet Zephaniah

§ 3. The prophet who dominates the age is Jeremiah son of Hilkiah. His birthplace is the village of Anathoth near Jerusalem. He belongs to a family of priests. At an early age he comes to the capital and begins his prophetic calling.

Jeremiah Comes to Jerusalem (626 B.C.E.)

Jeremiah prophesies because of an irresistible inner compulsion. The Lord has "put His words in his mouth." His life is to be one of persecution, suffering and tragedy. Being a true prophet, he is compelled to prophesy not gladness but sorrow. Men, therefore, became his enemies. In Jerusalem, he feels impelled to denounce the prevailing idolatry and corruption, as well as the idolatrous priests and false prophets.

His Initiation and Tragic Career

A great change, amounting to a religious revolution, took

place shortly afterwards. A copy of the Book of Deuteronomy was discovered by the high priest Hilkiah during repairs in the Temple. The Book was read to King Josiah and it made a profound impression on him. He realized how far his people had strayed from the Covenant and the Law. He convoked a grand and solemn assembly in Jerusalem. The Book was read to the multitude. The people pledged themselves to be faithful to it.

King Josiah Accomplishes a Religious Revolution (621 B.C.E.)

The land was cleansed of the idols and "high places." Not only Judah, but the former territory of Israel was swept clean of idolatry. The King then decreed Jerusalem as the only legitimate place of worship. The priests of the local shrines were received into the service of the Temple. The Passover of that year (621 B.C.E.) was observed in Jerusalem with great ceremony and zeal.

Idolatry Abolished; Worship Centralized

§ 4. The fall of Nineveh, which the prophet Nahum foresaw, occurred in 612 B.C.E. Her conquerors were Scythians, Medes and Chaldeans. The latter were a Semitic race which had penetrated into Babylonia. They became the leading heir of the power of Assyria.

Fall of Assyria: The Chaldeans

The Egyptian Pharaoh, Necho II, fearing Assyria's conquerors, marched up to assist his former enemies. King Josiah determined to bar his way. Egypt and Judah clashed at Megiddo in the Valley of Jezreel. Judah was defeated. Josiah was slain in the battle.

Josiah Slain in Battle with Egypt (609 B.C.E.)

Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, was made king. He offered to submit to Egypt. But the Pharaoh deposed him, and exiled him to Egypt where he died.

Jehoahaz

The Pharaoh made Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, king. He laid a heavy tribute on Judah. But in 605 B.C.E. the Egyptians were routed at the Battle of Carchemish by the Chaldeans led by Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiakim acknowledged the new master.

Egypt Defeated by the Chaldeans (605 B.C.E.)

Several years later the king of Judah revolted against Nebuchadnezzar. He must have been egged on by Egypt. The Chaldeans and other enemies came down and besieged Jerusalem. Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin.

Jehoiakim Defies Nebuchadnezzar

Nebuchadnezzar came down in person to push the siege. Jehoiachin surrendered. The conqueror looted the palace and Temple. Then he carried off into captivity the King, his government, his household, and ten thousand of the leading men of the nation. It was the First Babylonian Captivity. Nebuchadnezzar placed Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, on the throne of Judah.

First Babylonian Captivity (597 B.C.E.)

§ 5. The dominant figure of the times was the prophet Jeremiah. His voice rises above the din of war and terror. He had, no doubt, many disciples and followers. The most important was the priest Ezekiel. His close friend was the scribe Baruch son of Neriah.

Jeremiah Dominant

Jeremiah regarded idolatry as the source of all other sins and vices. He had as little use for sacrifice as the other prophets. He dreamed of a "new covenant," under which men will know God through the mystic power of the heart.

Jeremiah's Teachings

The immediate future, however, he saw black with doom. Nebuchadnezzar is the instrument of God for punishing the nations, including Judah. Not even the Temple will have the power to save. Will the wicked commit their crimes and then seek refuge in the Temple? Has the Temple become "a den of robbers" in their eyes?

The "Day of the Lord"

Jeremiah's bold words cost him a great deal of sorrow and persecution. The priests and false prophets bring him to trial before the princes. The latter release him on the ground that a previous prophet had pronounced the same prophecies without being molested. On another occasion Baruch, who had written down Jeremiah's words on a scroll, read them first to the people and princes, then to King Jehoiakim. The latter, in a rage, cut the scroll up and burned it. The King ordered the prophet to appear before him, but Jeremiah hid himself. Soon afterwards came the First Babylonian Captivity. Among those who were led away was Jeremiah's disciple Ezekiel.

Jeremiah, "Man of Sorrows"

§ 6. Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had placed on the throne

after the First Captivity, was torn between the party that favored revolt against Babylonia and the party that opposed it. The first party relied on Egypt for help. Jeremiah, who was opposed to revolt, ridiculed this hope. The people, he declared, must bear the yoke. He wrote to the first captives advising them to establish themselves in their new country.

Revolt or Submission?

The war party gained the upper hand. In 588 B.C.E. Zedekiah rebelled. Nebuchadnezzar sent a huge armament against Jerusalem. The Chaldean plan of siege was to starve the city into surrender.

Zedekiah Revolts

Jerusalem defended itself heroically. But soon the famine became severe. Then the report arrived that the Egyptians were coming to relieve the city. The Chaldeans went to meet them. They defeated the Egyptians or came to an understanding with them. The Chaldeans returned and resumed the siege. Jeremiah had predicted they would return. The men in power continued to persecute him. Once, he was thrown by them into a miry pit from which, however, he was rescued. The King begged him for a word of comfort, but Jeremiah had none to give him.

The Siege of Jerusalem

Finally, the Chaldean engines made a breach in the northern wall, and the city was stormed. Zedekiah and his household fled, but they were captured. Nebuchadnezzar compelled the Jewish king to witness the execution of his sons. Then he blinded him, and sent him into exile. Jerusalem was razed, and, on the ninth of Ab, 586 B.C.E., the Temple was burnt down. All, except the very poor, were driven into captivity.

Jerusalem Destroyed: the Second Captivity

Gedaliah son of Ahikam was made governor of those who were left. He tried bravely to reëstablish the Jewish community with Mizpah as the center. But he was assassinated by one of the princes. The last hope seemed blotted out.

Gedaliah Assassinated

Those who were left in Mizpah decided to flee to Egypt. They compelled Jeremiah to go with them. There the great prophet died.

Fate of Jeremiah

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Reaction under Manasseh*

1. Describe the two major tendencies that are seen at work in Jewish history.

2. Explain the meaning of the expression "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

3. Why was the religious issue the most important in the struggle between the two tendencies?

4. Describe the parties that represented each of those tendencies in the reign of Hezekiah, telling who made up each one, and what each stood for in the matter of religion.

5. Why did Sennacherib's failure make the prophetic party supreme?

6. What change occurred in the reign of Manasseh?

7. Illustrate the extremes to which idolatry went in the reign of Manasseh.

8. How did the *Anavim* fare during that reign?

9. Give a brief account of Sennacherib's career after his return to his own country.

10. Explain how Esarhaddon dashed the hopes of the pro-Egyptian party in Judah.

11. How did Manasseh fare under Esarhaddon?

12. What happened in Jerusalem after the death of Manasseh?

§ 2. *Nahum and Zephaniah*

13. Name the different enemies that began to batter at Assyria.

14. What accounts for Assyria's exhaustion?

15. Which of the new enemies appeared to be the most formidable?

16. Why does the prophet Nahum rejoice?

17. How does he describe the city of Nineveh?

18. In what respects are Zephaniah's utterings "in the line of the prophets of the previous century"?

19. What does Zephaniah mean by the "day of the LORD"?

20. How does he look upon the Scythians?

21. What vision does he see in the distant future?

§ 3. *The Reformation of 621* B.C.E.—*Jeremiah*

22. What was Jeremiah's place of origin and what sort of family did he belong to?

23. Why did he leave his native village and come to Jerusalem?

24. Compare his initiation into prophecy with that of Isaiah.

25. Explain the sentence "I weary myself to hold it in."

26. Why does Jeremiah prophesy sorrow instead of joy?

27. What sort of life is he destined to lead?

28. Why did Jeremiah find no happiness in Jerusalem?

29. What indicates that Jerusalem was not as black as the prophets were inclined to paint it?

30. What important discovery was made in the Temple in 621 B.C.E.?

31. Describe the effect that the reading of the Book of Deuteronomy had upon the youthful King Josiah.

32. What is there about the Book which is so capable of stirring the hearer?

33. Give an account of the first act in the religious revolution carried through by King Josiah.

34. How did Josiah proceed in order to abolish idolatry?

35. What enabled him to extend his operations to the former territory of Israel?

36. How did he proceed in order to centralize the worship?

37. Describe the celebration of the Passover of 621 B.C.E.

§ 4. *Assyria, Chaldea, Egypt and Judah*

38. What did the fall of Nineveh signify for the nations of the Eastern World?

39. Discuss the Chaldeans, commenting on their origin, race, language, and civilization.

40. Why did Necho II decide to bring aid to the Assyrians, Egypt's enemies?

41. Why did Josiah decide to bar his passage?

42. Describe the position of Judah after the Battle of Megiddo.

43. Why was the Battle of Carchemish of great importance?

44. What change of policy did Jehoiakim make and what was the immediate consequence?

45. Give an account of the First Babylonian Captivity, referring to the reigning monarch of Judah, the conqueror, and his treatment of the vanquished.

§ 5. *Jeremiah, the "Man of Sorrows"*

46. What makes Jeremiah the "dominant personality of the period"?

47. Describe Jeremiah's following.

48. Who was Baruch son of Neriah?

49. Compare Jeremiah's ideas on the subject of idolatry with those of Hosea.

50. In what connection did Jeremiah utter his famous question: "Can the leopard change his spots"?

51. Discuss Jeremiah's ideas on the subject of sacrifice.

52. Explain what Jeremiah meant by the "new covenant."

53. How did Jeremiah look upon Nebuchadnezzar?

54. What was the notion concerning the Temple that existed among the people, which Jeremiah ridiculed?

55. What happened to Jeremiah as a result of his bold ridicule and denunciation?

56. Why did the princes release him?

57. Give an account of the incident with the scroll on which Baruch had written down his master's words.

§ 6. *The Downfall of Judah*

58. Describe the policies that were advocated by each of the two parties in Jerusalem.

59. What policy was advocated by Jeremiah?

60. What was Jeremiah's advice to the exiles of the First Captivity?

61. What was the position of King Zedekiah between the two parties?

62. Why did Nebuchadnezzar decide to destroy Jerusalem after Zedekiah's revolt?

63. Give an account of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.

64. Explain how the hope in Egypt proved vain.

65. How did Jeremiah fare during the siege? Cite incidents in illustration.

66. Recount the fate of King Zedekiah after the city's capture.

67. How did the conqueror treat (a) the city, (b) the Temple, and (c) the people?

68. Why was the assassination of Gedaliah a great misfortune?

69. How is this event still commemorated by the Jews?

70. What was the final fate of Jeremiah?

b. LITERATURE

A. Jeremiah

1. *The Prophet Summoned*

1. Compare the account of Jeremiah's initiation with Isaiah's. Which do you consider more impressive and why?

2. Explain fully the meaning of the parable of the seething pot.

2. *The Prophet's Plea*

3. Explain the "two evils" which Jeremiah accuses the people of having committed.

4. What does the prophet mean by "the waters of Shihor" and "the waters of the River"?

§ 3. *The Grievous Sins of the People*

5. Explain the meaning of the expression: "Peace, peace? when there is no peace."

6. Explain what it is that Jeremiah finds "appalling and horrible."

4. *The Enemy from the North*

7. The prophet compares the northern foe to a lion "gone up from his thicket," and to the wind from the desert. Which simile do you think the stronger and why?

8. Why are the people to assemble themselves in the fortified cities?

5. *A Vision of Restoration*

9. What circumstance encouraged Jeremiah to look forward to the restoration of Israel?

10. Point out two places in this selection where the prophet makes use of the figure of the shepherd and flock.

11. Point out two places in this selection that bear a resemblance, both in language and spirit, to the prophet Hosea.

12. Explain what Jeremiah meant by his "new covenant."

6. *The Prophet Denounces King Jehoiakim*

13. What are the crimes Jeremiah charges against the King?

14. What is the line that summarizes Jeremiah's conception of the ideal king?

7. Parable of the Potter and the Clay

15. Recount the story of Jeremiah's visit to the potter's shop.

16. Explain how Jeremiah applies what he saw there to the relations between God and man.

8. *The Foolish Trust in Temple and Sacrifice*

17. What is meant by "the formal aspect of religion"?

18. Explain the meaning of the question: "Is this house become a den of robbers in your eyes"?

19. Explain the origin of the word *Gehenna* or *Ge-Hinnom,* the Hebrew word for "Hell."

9. *The Prophet Exults in Egypt's Defeat*

20. Give the historic background of this taunt song by Jeremiah.

21. Explain the prophet's simile comparing Necho to the Nile River.

10. *The Perfidy of the Slave Owners*

22. Give the historic background of this denunciation.

23. What was the Mosaic law on the subject of Hebrew slaves?

11. *The Prophet Bewails His Destiny*

24. Explain what Jeremiah means when he says: "O, LORD, thou has enticed me, and I was enticed."

25. What did he mean by "the burning fire shut up in his bones"?

12. *The Prophet in Despair for His People*

26. Explain the meaning of the lines: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

27. What is the meaning of "Is there no balm in Gilead"?

B. A Dirge for Zion Overthrown

28. Why is the Book of Lamentations read in the Synagogues on Tisha B'Ab?

29. Explain the meaning of the lines: "Her princes are like harts, that find no pasture."

C. The Day of Wrath

30. What are the transgressions with which Zephaniah charges the ruling classes of Judah?

31. What do we learn from the line: "And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops."

D. A Paean for the Downfall of Nineveh

32. Give the historic background of this song of jubilation.

33. Why does the prophet call Nineveh "a den of lions"?

34. Pick out the lines which in your judgment paint the most vivid picture of Nineveh's downfall.

35. What did clapping the hands signify?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. THE PASSOVER OF THE YEAR 621 B.C.E.

This was the Passover that came as a climax to the religious revolution of King Josiah. Imagine you were present at one of the solemn services in the Temple. Write a report of what took place. Include a brief address by King Josiah wherein he explains the aim of his reformation. You may include also an

address by Jeremiah in which the prophet exhorts the people to remain steadfast in their newfound faith.

2. Nineveh Has Fallen!

A messenger has come to Jerusalem with the news that Nineveh has fallen. There is tremendous excitement in the Judean capital. Tell what the messenger reported, and then describe the scenes in the capital. In the outer court of the Temple, there is a gathering of people. One of the prophets — it may be Nahum — addresses them. Report his address. Think what Nineveh or Assyria has meant to the world and to the Jewish people especially. Let the prophet explain all that, and then point out what the fall of Nineveh means.

3. The "Man of Sorrows"

On the basis of §§ 3, 5, and 6 of the text, write a biographical sketch of the Prophet Jeremiah from his initiation until his exile into Egypt. Bring out his leading ideas as well as the chief events in his life. Emphasize the rôle he played during the siege of Jerusalem. It must be the story of a spiritual giant whose fate was sorrow and persecution.

4. In the Days of the Siege

This is to be a diary covering the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and consisting of five entries as follows: 1. The enemy appears before the city; 2. The enemy abandons the siege to meet the Egyptians; 3. The enemy returns and resumes the siege; 4. The enemy has entered the city through a breach in the wall; and 5. The enemy has destroyed the city and burnt the Temple. This must not to be a dry record. It must be alive with all the varied emotions that swept through the city during those fateful days.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. Chapters XV, XVI and XVII of Volume One of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz will be found useful for filling in the picture of the period dealt with in this Topic (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891).

2. For a more complete exposition of the life and teachings of Jeremiah than it was possible to give in the text, read the article

on Jeremiah in the Jewish Encyclopedia. (New York, Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1904).

3. Stefan Zweig, the German-Jewish poet, has written a superbly beautiful drama entitled "Jeremiah," dealing with the deeds and sorrows of the great prophet. Toward the end, however, Zweig ascribes certain vague and attenuated ideas to Jeremiah which are his own and not the prophet's. The drama has been translated into English by Eden and Cedar Paul. (T. Seltzer, New York, 1922).

4. For a fine exposition of the character and leading ideas of Jeremiah, read pp. 370–377 of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes. (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1924.)

5. A fuller account of the career of Assyria will be found in "The Conquest of Civilization" by James Henry Breasted, pp. 156–179. (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1926.)

CHRONOLOGIC CHART

For Volume One

All dates are B.C.E. Early dates are approximate.

CANAAN	EGYPT	MESOPOTAMIA *Babylonia*
	3400 King Menes (First Dynasty)	
	3000 **The Pyramid Age**	3000 **Sumer**
	2500 Relations with Canaan	2500 Sargon, the Akkadian
	2100 **The Feudal Age**	**"Sumer and Akkad"**
Abraham Isaac Jacob	2000 Relations with Canaan (Story of Sinuhi)	2050 Hammurabi **Babylonia**
	1700 Invasion of Hyksos ("Shepherd Kings")	
Continued Arrival of the Hebrews	1580 Expulsion of Hyksos **The New Empire**	Kassites and other Invaders
	1460 Canaan Conquered by Thutmose III	
	1360 Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton) El-Amarna Letters	
Egyptian Suzerainty	1292–1225 Rameses II ("The Pharaoh of the Oppression")	**Assyria:** First Period of Expansion
	1225–1215 Merneptah ("The Pharaoh of the Exodus")	
The Conquest under Joshua	1220 The Exodus	
1200–1100 The Judges		
1100–1020 Samuel		
1080 Battle of Aphek		
1028–1013 King Saul		
1013 Battle of Gilboa		

CHRONOLOGIC CHART

For Volume Two

All dates are B.C.E.

CANAAN Palestine		EGYPT	ASSYRIA and BABYLONIA Chaldea
1013–1006 David, king of Judah only 1006–973 **David king of all Israel** 973–933 **Solomon**		947–925 Shishak	
Judah	**Israel**		
933–917 Rehoboam	933–912 **Jeroboam I**		
917–915 Abijah	912–911 Nadab		
915–875 Asa	911–888 Baasa		
	888–887 Elah		
	887–876 **Omri**		
875–851 Jehoshaphat	876–853 Ahab		
	Elijah		860–825 Shalmaneser III
851–844 Jehoram	853–852 Ahaziah		854 Battle of Karkar
844–843 Ahaziah	852–843 Jehoram		
843–837 Athaliah	843–816 Jehu		842 Jehu pays tribute to Shalmaneser
	Elisha		
837–798 Jehoash	816–800 Jehoahaz		
798–780 Amaziah	800–785 Jehoash		
780–740 **Uzziah**	785–745 **Jeroboam II**		
	Amos		745–727 Tiglath-pileser III
	Hosea		
740–736 Jotham	744 Zechariah		
	Shallum		
	744–737 Menahem		
	737–736 Pekahiah		
735–720 Ahaz	736–734 Pekah		
Isaiah	733–722 Hoshea		
	722 **Fall of Israel**		727–722 Shalmaneser IV
720–692 Hezekiah			722–705 **Sargon II**
Micah			705–681 **Sennacherib**
701 **Jerusalem delivered**			
692–638 Manasseh			681–669 Esarhaddon
638 Amon			
638–609 Josiah		671 Fall of Memphis	668–626 Ashurbanipal
Nahum			
Zephaniah		666 Fall of Thebes	
Jeremiah			625–605 Nabopolassar, King of Babylon
621 Reformation of Josiah			
609 Battle of Megiddo		609–593 Necho II	612 **Fall of Nineveh**
609 Jehoahaz			
608–598 Jehoiakim			605 Battle of Carchemish
598 Jehoiachin			
597 First Babylonian Captivity			605–562 **Nebuchadnezzar**
597–587 Zedekiah			
586 **Fall of Judah**			
Gedaliah			

INDEX

INDEX

1. Numbers printed in black-face type (thus, **121**) *refer to pages where the subject is treated most fully.*

2. f. means "and the page following."

3. ff. means "and the pages following."

Ab, 108 (note 30)
Abel (town), 29
Abiathar, 18, 27, supports Adonijah, *32*; **41** (note 17); banished by Solomon, 71
Abijah, reign of, 243
Abishag, 71
Abishai, 5, 19, defeats the Edomites, 21; **42** (note 25)
Abner, escapes across Jordan, 5; at war with David, 6 f.; slays Asahel, 7; deserts Ishbaal, 7; visits David, 7; slain by Joab, 7
Absalom, slays Amnon, 25; escapes to Geshur, 25; recalled by David, 25; revolt of, 27 f.; pursues David, 27; defeated by Joab, 28; slain by Joab, 28; mourned by David, 28
Absimilkutti, 331 (illus.)
Acco, 137
Achzib, 137
Adad, see Hadad, idol.
Adar, 108 (note 30)
Adonijah, attempts to succeed David, 32 ff.; his *coup d'état* that failed, 32 ff.; his death, 71
Adoniram, 72, hated by the people, 97; stoned to death, 124
Adullam, 9 (see also vol. 1)
Africa, 138
Agriculture, **87** ff., implements of, 88 (illus.)
Ahab, 143 (illus.); marries Jezebel, 144; 144 (illus.); his character, 144, 171; denounced by Elijah, 147; obtains the vineyard of Naboth, 149; accused by Elijah, 149; at war with the Arameans, 150 f.; defeats Ben-hadad II, 150 f.; attacks Ramoth-gilead, 151 f.; dies in battle, 153
Ahaz, accession of, 250; reign of, **250** f.; attacked by Israel and Aram, 250; vassal of Assyria, 251 f.; adopts Assyrian idolatry, 252; sacrifices his son, 253
Ahaziah of Israel, 149, reign of, 153
Ahaziah of Judah, 156, his death, 157, 246
Ahijah, the prophet, encourages Jeroboam, 96; denounces Jeroboam, 130
Ahithophel, 27
Ain Fara, 340 (illus.)
Akabah, Gulf of, 21, 22 (illus.), 73
Akabah, port of, 22 (illus.)
Akedah, the, 31 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Akkadians, 200 (see also vol. 1)
Alexander the Great, 138 (illus.)
Alphabet, 76 (illus.); Aramean, 133, 140; Phoenician, 133, **140**; Hebrew, Greek, Egyptian, etc., 140; 154 (illus.)
Altar of Incense, 83
Altar, the, an asylum from the blood avenger, 104 (note 21); horns of, 104 (note 21)
Amalek, conquered by David, 21 (see also vol. 1)
Amasa, defeated by Joab, 28; slain by Joab, 29

Amaziah, high priest at Beth-el, 189; clashes with Amos, 192
Amaziah, king of Judah, defeats the Edomites, 160; challenges Jehoash of Israel, 160; defeated by Jehoash, 161, 180 f.; reign of, **248** f.; death of, 249
Amenhotep IV, 137
Amman, 20 (illus.)
Ammon, conquered by David, 21; 77, 272, 357 (see also vol. 1)
Ammonites, defeated by Joab, 19 ff.; 127; attack Israel, 159; defeated by Uzziah, 250; invade Judah, 350
Amnon, 25, slain by Absalom, 25
Amon, King, 332
Amon-Re, 129 (illus.), 268 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Amos, **189** ff., birthplace of, 189; appearance of, at Beth-el, 189, 226 ff.; denounces the rich oppressors, 191; scorns sacrifice, 192; attacked by the high priest, 192; his doctrine of Israel's selection, 193, 222 (note 13); sees the menace of Assyria, 193 f.; his inner compulsion to prophesy, 195; his passion for justice, 195; arraigns Israel, 219 ff.; denounces luxury, 222 f.; proclaims "the day of the Lord," 224 f.; and Hosea compared, 231
Amos, Book of, 219 (note)
Anata, 337 (illus.)
Anathoth, 336, 337 (illus.), 340 (illus.)
Anavim, 329; persecuted, 330; return to power, 340
Anti-Lebanon, 131 (illus.), 136
Aphek, Battle of, 151
Arabia, 135
Aram, map of, 134, **135** ff.; Israel a vassal of, 158; defeated by Jehoash, 160; defeated by Jeroboam II, 185; 202 (see also Arameans)
Aramaic, 133, 304 (note 49), 345
Arameans, join the Ammonites, 19; defeated by David, 20; 75, 127, **133** ff.; race and language of, 133; writing system of, 133; distribution of, 135; relations of, with Israel, 135; reduce Israel, 144; defeated by Ahab, 150 f.; attacked by Jehoram, 156; overrun Israel east of Jordan, 158; invade Judah, 248, 350
Ararat, Mount, 204
Araunah the Jebusite, 31 (illus.), 32, 79
Architecture, of the Temple, 83 ff.; 307 (note 56)
"A Remnant-Shall-Return," 282, 311
Ark of the Covenant, transferred to Jerusalem, 15 ff.; 41 (note 18), 84, 85, 392 (note 87) (see also vol. 1.)
Armenians, 208
Arnon River, 154 f.
Arvad, 137
Asa, bribes Ben-hadad, 131; at peace with Israel, 142; reign of, **244** f.; combats idolatry, 244; fortifies Jerusalem, 244; defeats the Africans, 245
Asahel, 5, slain by Abner, 7
Ashdod, rebels against Assyria, 269; captured by Assyrians, 270
Ashera, 144 (illus.), 216, 265, 342
Ashkelon, 272
Ashtoreth, 118 (note 59) (see also Astarte and Ishtar)
Ashurbanipal, 332
Assimilation, 327, 409 and note 44 (see also vol. 1)
Assur (city), 200, 205
Assur (idol), his sign, 159 (illus.); principal deity of Assyria, 201; "conqueror of the locust," 253 (illus.)
Assurnazirpal III, 202 (illus.)
Assyria, 127, 185, **200** ff.; origins of, 200; first period of expansion of, 202 ff.; second period of expansion of, 204 ff.; map of, 204; at her zenith, 331 f.; decline of, 333; causes of decline of, 333 f.; downfall of, 344 f.; division of, 348 (map) (see also Assyrians)
Assyrians, 22, 137; halted at Battle of Karkar, 151; 158; capture Damascus, 160; war chariots of,

198 (illus.); historical sketch of, **200** ff.; adopt Sumerian culture, 200; martial spirit of, 200 f.; religion of, 201, 251 (illus.), 252; develop astrology, 201; begin their imperial career, 202; reach the Mediterranean, 202; checked by Phoenicia, Aram and Egypt, 202; civil wars and rebellions against, 203; Second Empire of, 204; conquests of, under Tiglath-pileser III, 204; military proficiency of, 205, 269 (illus.), 273 (illus.); terror and torture of, 205, 206 (illus.); their policy of deportation, 205 f.; overrun Israel, 209; save Ahaz, 251; subdue rebellious nations, 272 (see also Assyria)
Astarte, 96, 118 (note 59), 141, 144 (illus.), 197; identified with Ishtar, 201 (see also vol. 1)
Astrology, 201
Athaliah, marries Jehoram, 246; seizes throne of Judah, 246; promotes idolatry, 247; death of, 248
Atonement, Day of, 84, 94
Authorized Version, 62 (note 91)
Azariah, King of Judah, see Uzziah
Azariah son of Nathan, 72
Azariah son of Zadok, 72

B

Baal, 141, 144; exposed by Elijah, 147 f.; 175 (note 36), 216 f.; worship of, suppressed by Josiah, 342 (see also vol. 1)
Baasa, seizes throne of Israel, 130; wars on Judah, 131; attacked by his ally Ben-hadad, 131; downfall of his house, 132
Babylon, 22; captured by Assyrians, 202; 209; rebels against Assyria, 270; destroyed by Sennacherib, 332; restored, 333; ruins of, 358 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Babylonia, see Babylon, Chaldea (see also vol. 1)
Babylonians, 201; prophecy among, 215; 334 (see also Chaldeans, Chaldea and vol. 1)
Bamoth, see "High places"
Baruch, **351** f.; writes down and reads the words of Jeremiah, 356
Bashan, 155 (illus.), 224 (note 18)
Bath (measure of quantity), 293 (note 17)
Bathsheba, 24, 32; demands the succession for her son, 33
Beirut, 147 (illus.)
Benaiah, 19; supports Solomon, 32; slays Joab, 71; Solomon's commander, 71
Ben-hadad I, attacks his ally Baasa, 131; reduces Israel, 144
Ben-hadad II, defeated by Ahab, 150 f.; murdered by Hazael, 156
Ben-hadad III, besieges Samaria, 158; defeated by Jehoash, 160
Benjamin, 26, 126, 235 (note 49) (see also vol. 1)
Berytus, 137, 147 (illus.)
Beth-el, 126, 129, 189, 197, 343 (see also vol. 1)
Beth-horon, 74
Beth-lehem, 190 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Beth-shemesh, Battle of, 160 f.
Bible, translations of, 62 (note 91)
Black Obelisk, 159 (illus.), 203 (illus.)
Blood revenge, 7, 104 (note 21) (see also vol. 1)
Borsippa, 361 (illus.)
Brazen Altar, 84, 85 (illus.)
Britain, 138
"Bronze Sea," see "Molten Sea"
Brook of Egypt, 114 (note 43)
Browning, Robert, 390 (note 79)
Bull-worship, of Jeroboam I, 129; 130 (illus.)
Byblos, see Gebal

C

Calendar, the Hebrew, 108 (note 30)
Calmet, Augustin, 85 (illus.)
Canaanites, 76, enslaved by Solomon, 96; religion of, 216 f. (see also vol. 1)
Captivity, First Babylonian, 350; Second Babylonian, 361 f.

Carchemish, Battle of, 348 f.; Jeremiah exults in, 353 f.; 395 (note 96)
Carmel, Mount, 147, 219 (note 2)
Carthage, 138 f.
Cattle-raising, see Shepherding
Cavalry, 74, 304 (note 48)
Cedars of Lebanon, 81 (illus.)
Census, taken by David, 31 f.
Chaldea, beginnings of, 345; defeats Egypt, 348 f.; under Nebuchadnezzar, 359 ff.; 395 (note 96)
Chaldeans, 333; conquer Babylonia, 344; race, origin and civilization of, **344** f.; defeat Egypt, 348; invade Judah, 350, 359; besiege Jerusalem, 359; capture and destroy Jerusalem, 361 f.
Chariot, 198 (illus.)
Chemosh, 96, 154, 156
Cherethites, 40 (note 11)
Cherubim, 84, 85
Cheshvan, see *Heshvan*
Cheyne, Thomas K., 289 (note)
Chipiez, Charles, 82 (illus.)
"Chosen People, the," Amos' conception of the doctrine of, 193
Chronicles, Book of, 48 (note)
Cimmerians, 333
Coele-Syria, 136 (illus.)
Commerce, routes of, 72; under Solomon, 73; of Israel, 126; of Phoenicians, 137 ff.; under Jeroboam II, 186
Costumes, 220 (note 6), 295
Covenant, between God and Israel, 341; accepted by Josiah and the people, 342; new, proclaimed by Jeremiah, 353, 387
Crafts and trades, 91 f., 186
Cubit, 81, 181 (note 64)
Cuneiform writing, 200 (see also vol. 1)
Cush, 45 (note 34)
Cyprus, 138, 374 (note 17)

D

Damascus, 20, 75, **131** (illus.), 135, Israelite merchants admitted into, 151; captured by Assyrians, 160; captured by Jeroboam II, 185, 202; captured by Tiglath-pileser III, 204, 209
Dan, 76, 129 (see also vol. 1)
Daphne, 375 (note 21)
David, **3** ff.; mourns for Saul and Jonathan, 3 ff.; his lament, 4; elected king of Judah, 5; sends messengers to Jabesh, 6; fights Ishbaal, 6 f.; receives Abner, 7; mourns for Abner, 7; avenges Ishbaal, 8; king over all Israel, 8; at war with the Philistines, 9; defeats the Philistines, 9; captures Jerusalem, 11; makes it his capital, 15 f.; transfers the Ark to Jerusalem, 15 ff.; dances before the Ark, 17; desires to build temple, 17; his government, 18; his military system, 18 f.; his personal guard, 19; conquers the Ammonites, 19 ff.; annexes Damascus, 20; conquers Amalek, Moab and Edom, 21; his empire, 22, 23 (map); his allies, 22; his crime against Uriah, 24; denounced by Nathan, 24 f.; repents, 25; his complex nature, 25; recalls Absalom, 25; flees before Absalom, 27, 39; escapes across the Jordan, 28; puts down Absalom's rebellion, 28; mourns Absalom, 28, 43; escorted back to his capital, 28; puts down Sheba's rebellion, 29; praises the Lord, 29; befriends Meribaal, 30; buys threshing floor of Araunah, 31 (illus.); takes a census of the people, 31; the plague in the reign of, 32; his old age, 30; orders Solomon anointed his successor, 33; death of, 34 f.; remembered as the greatest king of Israel, 34 f.; tomb of, 34 (illus.); as poet and psalmist, 3 ff., 25, 29, 51, 130 (see also vol. 1)
David, City of, 11
David, house (dynasty) of, continuity of, 130 f.; 243 ff.; break in the, 246; restored, 248; Messiah a scion of, 283, 312 (note 75)
"Day of the Lord, the," 194, 209, proclaimed by Amos, 224; Isaiah's

conception of, 258; Zephaniah's conception of, 335, 409; Jeremiah's conception of, 353; 364
Dead Sea, 155, 189, 190 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Debir, 83, 86
Deity, see Religion
Delitzsch, Franz, 62 (note 96)
Demons, 251 (illus.), 330 (illus.) (see also Idolatry)
Deportation, an Assyrian practice, 205 f.; first, of Israel, 209; final, of Israel, 211; 275 (illus.); first Babylonian, 350; second Babylonian, 361 f.
Deuteronomy, Book of, discovered in Temple, 340; effect of, on King Josiah, 341 f. (see also vol. 1)
Dibon, 154
Dome of the Rock, see Omar, Mosque of
Dress, see Costumes
Driver, S. R., 413
Drought, foretold by Elijah, 146
Dynastic revolutions, 130, 132, 207, 246

E

Ea, 271 (illus.)
Ebal, Mount, 128 (illus.)
Economic abuses, 186 f., 192, denounced by Amos, 192
Economic conditions, under Solomon, **87** ff.; under Jeroboam II, 185 ff.
Edom, conquered by David, 21; 77, 153; revolts, 246; 272, 357 (see also Edomites and vol. 1)
Edomites, defeated by Abishai, 21; 127; defeated by Amaziah, 160, 249; rebel against Judah, 248; defeated by Uzziah, 250 (see also Edom and vol. 1)
Education, in Israel and Judah, 194
Egypt, in decline, 22, 73; Solomon's alliance with, 75; history of, since the Exodus, 75 f.; as neighbor of Judah, 127; subjects the Phoenicians, 137; 202, 207, 208, 210; alliance with, opposed by Isaiah, 267 f.; dupes the small nations, 268; conquered by Assyria, 332; regains independence, 333; attempts to supplant Assyria, 346 f.; defeated by Chaldeans, 348; foments rebellion against Chaldea, 357; Jews in, 363 (see also vol. 1)
Egyptians, 158; prophecy among, 215; fail to relieve Jerusalem, 360 (see also Egypt)
Ekah, see Lamentations, Book of
Ekron, 272
Elah, murdered by Zimri, 132
Elam, 313 (note 78)
Elamites, 332, 333
Elath, 22 (illus.), 250
Elders, functions of the, 93
Eliakim, 267, 277
Elijah, his appearance, 146; his marvelous deeds, 146; his victory over Baal, 147 f., 165; escapes from Jezebel, 148; hears "the still small voice," 148; appoints Elisha his successor, 148; denounces Ahab, 149; his assumption to heaven, 150; Israel's special guardian, 150
Elisha, succeeds Elijah, 148; leads the struggle against idolatry, 153; predicts victory of Jehoash, 160
Elkosh, 412 (note 49)
Eloth, see Elath
Elul, 108 (note 30)
"End of Days," 255, 281, **311** ff.
En-rogel, 32
Ephah, 225 (note 22)
Ephraim, meaning kingdom of Israel, see Israel, kingdom of
Ephraim, tribe of, 11, 26; flocks to Jeroboam, 95; resentful against Solomon, 97, 126, 266 (see also vol. 1)
Ephraimites, see Ephraim
E-Saggila, 361 (illus.)
Essarhaddon, 331 (illus.), invades Egypt, 332
Ethbaal, 144
Ethics, of the Jewish faith, 55 (note 58)
Ethiopia, 45 (note 34), 270, 279 and illus.
Euphrates River, 22, 73, 185, 202
Exile, see Captivity and Deportation
Ezekiel, 141, 356

E-Zida, 361 (illus.)
Ezion-geber, 22 (illus.), 73, 75, 246

F

Famine, under Ahab, 146 ff.
Farming, see Agriculture
Fast of Gedaliah, 363 (note)
Feast of Booths, see Succoth
Feast of Tabernacles, see Succoth
Feast of Weeks, see Shabuoth
Feasts and festivals, 93 f.
"Fertile Crescent," 133, 135 (see also vol. 1)
Festivals, see Feasts and Festivals
First-fruits, 373 (note 12)
Forest of Ephraim, Battle of the, 28, 43 ff.
Fruit growing, 88

G

Gad, the prophet, 32
Gad, tribe of, 154 (see also vol. 1)
Galilee, 209
Gath, 9
Gaza, 114 (note 43), rebels against Assyria, 269
Gebal, 147 (illus.)
Gedaliah, **363** f.; made governor of Judah, 363; assassination of, 363; Fast of, 363 (note)
Gehenna, see *Ge-hinnom*
Ge-hinnom, 26 (illus.), 394 (note 93)
Gerizim, Mount, 128 (illus.)
German Palestine Society, 347 (illus.)
Gezer, 74; captured by Egypt, 76 f.; the Gezer calendar, 76 (illus.); ceded to Solomon, 77
Gibbethon, 130, 132
Gibborim, 9, **19,** 36
Gibeonites, execute Saul's descendants, 30 f. (see also vol. 1)
Gihon, Pool of, 33, 263 (map)
Gilboa, Mount, 3
Gilead, 144; devastated by Assyrians, 209; "balm of," 396 (note 2)
Gilead, Mount, 155 (illus.)
Gilgal, 191, 197
Gittites, 40 (note 11)
Gleaning, 87 f.
God, the One, Solomon's conception of, 86; taught by the prophets, 93; mystery of, 109 (note 34); in "the still small voice," 148, 169; Elijah's conception of, 167 (note 13); 171 (note 25); prophetic conception of, 188, **217,** 329; Amos' conception of, 195; Hosea's conception of, 198; popular conception of, 216 f.; an ethical Being, 323 f.
Gods, see Idolatry
Grain, 87 f.
"Great Lamenter, the," see Jeremiah
Greek alphabet, 140
Greeks, 135, 139, prophecy among, 215

H

Habakkuk, 220 (note)
Hadad, Edomite prince, escapes to Egypt, 21; returns to Edom, 75
Hadad, idol, 258 (illus.), 358 (illus.)
Hadadezer, 19 f., 75
Haggai, 220 (note)
Hagiographa, 50 (note)
Hall of Justice, of Solomon, 82
Hallelujah, 66 (note 10)
Hamath, 114 (note 43)
Hammurabi, 201 (see also vol. 1)
Hananiah, clashes with Jeremiah, 358
Hanno, 268
Hanun, 19, 21
Harvest Festivals, the, 93 f.
Hasmonean Period, aphabet of the, 140
Hathor, 147 (illus.)
Hauran, 155 (illus.)
Hazael, 156; attacks Jehu, 158; invades Judah, 248
Hazor, 74
Hebrew alphabet, 140
Hebrews, see Israelites
Hebrew University, 14 (illus.)
Hebron, 5, 6 (illus.), 9, 10, 27
Hechal, 83
Hell, see *Ge-hinnom*
Hermon, Mount, 63 (note 97), 239 (note 68)
Herod the Great, 152 (illus.)

Heshvan, 108 (note 30)
Hezekiah, **263** ff.; accession of, 263; religious reforms of, 264 f.; Jerusalem in the reign of, 263 (map), 264; purifies the Temple, 265; celebrates the Passover, 266 f.; government of, 267; defeats the Philistines, 269; displays his wealth, 271; rebuked by Isaiah, 271; rebels against Assyria, 272; subdued by Sennacherib, 273 ff.; appeals to Isaiah, 278; end of his reign, 280
"Hezekiah's Tunnel," 263 (map)
Hieroglyphics, 140
"High places," 130, 141, 144 (illus.), 180 (note 58), 217, 248, 264 f., 319 (note 84); suppressed by Josiah, 342
High priest, Abiathar, 27; Azariah, 72; Hilkiah, 340, 343; Jehoiada, 247; Zadok, 71
Hilkiah, high priest, 340, 343
Hinnom, Valley of, **13**, 26 (illus.), 79; human sacrifice in, 330, 342; identified with Hell, 394 (note 93)
Hiram (artist), 83, 85
Hiram, King, 15, 73; ally of Solomon, 80; compensated by Solomon, 97; 141
Hittites, conquer Phoenicia, **137**; 158, 200, 202
Holy City, 17 (see also Jerusalem)
Holy of Holies, 83 f., 85 (see also *Debir*)
Homer (measure of quantity), 293 (note 17)
Horeb, Mount, 148, 170 (note 23) (see also vol. 1)
Horses, trade in, under Solomon, 73
Hosea, **196** ff.; his tenderness, 196; denounces idolatry, 197; predicts disaster, 197; ridicules Israel's diplomacy, 197 f.; as a mystic, 198; decries sacrifice, 198; predicts a glorious future, 199, 238 ff., 231; and Amos compared, 231; pleads with Israel, 232 f.; indicts Israel, 234 ff.; reveals God's love for Israel, 237; proclaims a "New Betrothal," 238
Hosea, Book of, 232 (note)
Hoshea, slays Pekah, 209; revolts against Assyria, 210
House of the Forest of Lebanon, 82 (illus.), 83
Housing conditions, 91
Huldah, prophetess, 342
Human sacrifice, see Sacrifice, human
Hushai, 27

I

Idolatry, tolerated by Solomon, 77; subsists among the people, 93; opposed by the prophets, 96; of Jeroboam, 129 f.; Phoenician, 141 f.; 144 (illus.); of Phoenicia introduced into Israel, 144 f.; opposed by the prophets, 145 f.; Elijah's victory against, 147 f.; fought by Elisha, 153; Jehu and, 157 f.; hand in hand with luxury, 188; denounced by Hosea, 197; persistence of, 216; suppressed by Asa, 244; of Phoenicia, introduced into Judah, 246; fought by Jehoash of Judah, 248; Assyrian, 251 (illus.), 252, 330 (illus.); of Assyria introduced into Judah, 252; and social abuses, 253; suppressed by Hezekiah, 264 f.; Egyptian, 268 (illus.); 281 (illus.), 319 (note 86); the rich attracted by, 329; restored under Manasseh, 329; stamped out by Josiah, 342 f.; practiced by Jews in Egypt, 364
Idols, see Idolatry, Demons
Iliad, 36
Incense, 379 (note 41)
India, 73, 135, 139
Isaiah, 220 (note), **254** ff.; dominates his age, 254; as statesman and prophet, 254 f.; his initiation, 255 f., 288 ff.; denounces the rich, 256; his parable of the vineyard, 256 f., 291 ff.; his firmness and courage, 258; and King Ahaz, 259; hails Hezekiah, 263; opposes alliance with Egypt, 267 f.; walks in the guise of a captive, 269 f.; rebukes Hezekiah, 271; warns

against Egypt, 272; defies the Assyrians, 278 f.; vindicated, 280; his influence supreme, 280; his millenial doctrines, 281 ff.; death of, 283; as poet, 287; his arraignment of Israel, 296 ff.; his arraignment of Jerusalem, 299 ff.; his scorn of sacrifice, 300; his defiance of Assyria, 306; his denunciation of Assyria, 308 ff.; his followers, 329; legend concerning death of, 330
Isaiah, Book of, 288 (note)
Isaiah, the Second, 288 (note) (see also vol. 3)
Ishbaal, proclaimed king, 5; at war with David, 6 f.; murdered, 8
Ishmael, slays Gedaliah, 363
Ishtar, 118 (note 59); her sign, 159; worshiped by Assyrians, 201; 202 (illus.), as goddess of vegetation, 247 (illus.)
Isis, 96
Israel, the kingdom of, **124** ff.; elects Jeroboam its first king, 124; map of, 125; tribes in, 126; extent of, 126; and Judah compared, 126 f.; invaded by Shishak, 128; idolatry established in, 129 f; dynastic changes in, 130, 132, 157, 207, 208, 209; at peace with Judah, 142; reduced by Arameans, 144; Phoenician idolatry introduced into, 144 f.; wealth and luxury in, 145; defeats the Arameans, 150 f.; invaded by Arameans, 158; a vassal of Aram, 158; at low ebb, 159; restored under Jehoash, 160; defeats the Arameans, 160, 185; prosperity of, under Jeroboam II, 185; the "differential" in history of, 189; education in, 194; civil war in, 207; parties in, 207 f.; rebels against Assyria, 208; attacks Judah, 208; overrun by Assyrians, 209; first deportation of, 209; rebels under Hoshea, 210; conquered by Sargon II, 211; people of, exiled, 211; colonized by strangers, 211; end of, 211; Josiah extends authority to former territory of, 343
Israelites (as distinguished from Judahites, see Israel, kingdom of), subjected by Philistines, 5; united under David, 8; defeat the Philistines, 9; Jerusalem capital of the, 15 f.; conquer Ammon, Aram, Amalek, Moab and Edom, 19 ff.; a great power, 22; visited by pestilence in reign of David, 32; their pride in David, 35; under Solomon, 70 ff.; taxed by Solomon, 72 f.; labor at Solomon's buildings, 80 f., 96 f.; attend the dedication of the Temple, 85; a nation of farmers, 87; learn crafts, 91; social life of, 92; social equality among, 93; discontent of, against Solomon, 96 f.; break up into two kingdoms, 124, 162; language of, 133 (for further references, see Israel and Judah)
Ittai the Gittite, 28, 40 (note 11)
"Ivory House," 145
Iyar, 108 (note 30)

J

Jabbok, River, 20 (illus.), 155 (illus.)
Jabesh, 6 (see also vol. 1)
Jaffa, 81
Jaffa gate, 79
Jebbeil, 147 (illus.)
Jebus, see Jerusalem
Jebusites, 11, 12 (illus.)
Jehoahaz, of Israel, reign of, 158 f.
Jehoahaz, of Judah, accession of, 347; deposed by Necho and exiled, 347
Jehoash of Israel, reign of, **160** f.; defeats the Arameans, 160; challenged by Amaziah, 160; defeats Amaziah, 161, 180 f.
Jehoash of Judah, rescued from Athaliah, 246; coronation of, 247; reign of, **248** f.; subjected by Arameans, 248; death of, 248
Jehoiachin, accession of, 350; exile of, 350 f.
Jehoiada, 247

Jehoiakim, reign of, **347** ff.; subject to Egypt, 348; subject to Babylonia, 349; burns Jeremiah's scroll, 356; revolts against Nebuchadnezzar, 349; attacked by neighboring nations, 350; death of, 350, 356
Jehoram of Israel, **153** f.; Moab rebels against, 153 f.; campaign of, against Moab, 155 f., 174 ff.; opposed by the prophets, 156; attacks Ramoth-gilead, 156; slain by Jehu, 156 f.
Jehoram of Judah, marries Athaliah, 246; reign of, **246**
Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, joins Ahab against the Arameans, 153; joins Jehoram against Moab, 155; reign of, **245** f.
Jehoshaphat, Solomon's recorder, 72
Jehoshaphat, valley of, 13 (illus.)
Jehosheba, rescues Jehoash, 246
Jehu, **156** ff.; his character, 156; anointed king of Israel, 156; slays Jehoram, 157; orders death of Jezebel, 157; destroys the house of Omri, 157, 177 ff.; destroys the Baal worship, 157; his reign, 158; attacked by Arameans, 158; pays tribute to Assyrians, 158, 159 (illus.), 207
Jeremiah, birth and family of, 336; initiation of, 337 f., 369 ff.; tragedy of, 338; goes to Jerusalem, 339; denounces false prophets and priests, 339; denounces idolatry, 352; decries sacrifice, 353, 379, 393; proclaims a new covenant, 353; proclaims the "day of the LORD," 353; put in the stocks, 399; decries reliance on Temple, 354, 391 ff.; tried and acquitted, 354 f.; "Grotto of," 355 (illus.); dictates his words to Baruch, 356; opposes alliance with Egypt, 357; opposes rebellion against Chaldea, 357 f.; clashes with Hananiah, 358; advises the exiles, 358; arrested and released, 360; consulted by Zedekiah, 360; thrown into a pit, 361; advises surrender, 361; mourns over Jerusalem, 363; joins Gedaliah at Mizpah, 363; forced to migrate to Egypt, 363; death of, 364; career of, 367 f.; his call to repentance, 372 ff.; compared with Hosea, 372, 383 (note 55), 387 (note 70); denounces the sins of Judah, 377 ff.; his vision of restoration, 383 ff.; his denunciation of Jehoiakim, 388 f.; his parables, 358, 371, 390; rejoices in Egypt's defeat, 395 ff.; denounces the slave owners, 397 ff.; bewails his destiny, 399 f.; despairs for his people, 401 f.
Jeremiah, Book of, 369 (note); style of, 368
Jeroboam son of Nebat, revolts against Solomon, 95; escapes to Egypt, 95; returns to Palestine, 99; elected king of Israel, 124; at war with Judah, 127; saved by Shishak, 128; establishes idolatrous shrines in Israel, 129 f.; denounced by the prophets, 130; downfall of his house, 130
Jeroboam II, 160 (illus.), 161; reign of, **185**; conquests of, 185; prosperity under, 185; 203, 207
Jerusalem, topography of, 10 (map); location of, 11; natural strength of, 12 ff.; from Mount of Olives, 13 (illus.); environs of, 16 (map); spiritual significance of, 17; the Holy City, 17; in the reign of Solomon, 70 (map); fortified by Solomon, 79; besieged by Shishak, 243; captured by Jehoash of Israel, 161; besieged by Pekah and Rezin, 250; in the reign of Hezekiah, 263 (map); 264; surrender of, demanded by Sennacherib, 277; saved from Sennacherib, 280; sacked by Nebuchadnezzar, 350; besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, 359 ff.; heroic defense of, 361; captured, 361; destroyed, 362
Jewelry, 92 (illus.); worn by women, 295
Jezebel, marries Ahab, 144; introduces Phoenician idolatry into Israel, 144 f.; in conflict with the

prophets, 146; causes the death of Naboth, 149; 153; her death, 157, 177
Jezreel, city of, 143
Joab, commander of David's forces, 6; slays Abner, 7; captures Jerusalem, 11; 15; 19; defeats the Ammonites, 20 f.; intercedes for Absalom, 25; defeats Absalom, 28; slays Absalom, 28; slays Amasa, 29; puts down Sheba's rebellion, 29; supports Adonijah, 32; 35; his death, 71
Joahaz, see Jehoahaz
Joash, see Jehoash
Joel, 220 (note)
Joktheel, 248; captured by Amaziah, 249
Jonadab, 145 f.
Jonah, 220 (note)
Jonathan, mourned by David, 3 ff.
Joram, see Jehoram
Joseph, identical with Israel, 225 (note 25)
Joshua, 11, 87 (see also vol. 1)
Josiah, King, accession of, 332; Book of Deuteronomy read to, 341 f.; religious reformation of, 342 f.; centralizes the worship, 343; celebrates Passover, 343 f.; makes war on Necho II, 346; death of, 346
Jotham, reign of, 250
Jubilee Year, not observed, 187
Judah, the kingdom of, **126** ff.; map of, 125; tribes in, 126; extent of, 126; and Israel compared, 126 f.; invaded by Shishak, 128, 243; legitimacy in, 131; at war with Israel, 131 f.; at peace with Israel, 142; education in, 194; attacked by Israel and Aram, 208 f.; history of, **243** ff.; invaded by Arameans, 248; at low ebb, 248; restored by Uzziah, 250; invaded by Israel and Aram, 250; a vassal of Assyria, 251 ff.; social abuses in, 253; cleansed of idolatry, 264 f.; rebels against Assyria, 272; invaded by Sennacherib, 273; saved from Sennacherib, 280; map of, in time of Jeremiah, 328; cleansed of idolatry by Josiah, 342 f.; overcome by Egypt, 346; subject to Chaldea, 349; parties in, 357; rebels against Chaldea, 359; invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, 359; downfall of, 363
Judah, tribe of, 11, 26, 27, 28; exempted by Solomon, 73; 97, 124, 126 (see also vol. 1)
Judicial procedure, 93, 172 (note 32)

K

Karkar, Battle of, 151, **203**
Karnak, 129 and illus.
Kedar, 374 (note 17)
Ketubim, 403 (note)
Kidron, Valley of the, **13, 14 (illus.)**, 26 (illus.), 79, 266, 342
King James Version, 62 (note 91)
Kingdom of Israel, see Israel, kingdom of
Kingdom of Israel, see Israel, kingdom of
Kings, Book of, 100 (note), 174 (note)
Kingship, the, an elective office, 123
Kinoth, see Lamentations, Book of
Kislev, 108 (note 30)
Kittites, 374 (note 17)
Kuyunjik, 194 (illus.), 276 (illus.), 345 (illus.)

L

Lachish, 249, 276 and illus., 303 (note 43)
Lamentations, Book of, 355 (illus.), **403** (note); selections from, 404 ff.
Land tenure, 172 (note 29), 187, 235 (note 49), 261, 293 and note 16
Language, 133, 304 (note 49), 345
Larsa, 130 (illus.)
Latter Prophets, 288 (note)
Laver, 87 (illus.)
Layard, Sir Austen Henry, 345 (illus.)
Lebanon, forest of, 80, 81 (illus.); 239 (notes 66 and 67)
Lebanon Mountains, 136 and illus.
Leontes River, 136

Levi, 130 (see also vol. 1)
Levites, 130, 265, 267
Libnah, 246, 279
"Literary" Prophets, 194
Locust, 253 (illus.)
"Lost Ten Tribes, The," 211
Ludim, see Lybians
Luxury, under Solomon, 73; under Jeroboam II, 186; leads to idolatry, 188; denounced by Amos, 222; denounced by Isaiah, 295
Lybians, 76, defeated by Asa, 245; 396 (note 1)

M

Maacah, punished by Asa, 244
Machpelah, Cave of, 6 (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
Mahanaim, 5, 28
Major Prophets, 220 (note), 288 (note)
Malachi, 220 (note)
Malcam, see Milcom
Manasseh, King, accession of, 329; a vassal of Assyria, 331; exiled to Babylon, 332; liberated, 332
Manasseh, tribe of, 126, 266 (see also vol. 1)
Marduk, 201, 202, 271 (illus.), 358 (illus.), 361 (illus.)
Mareshah, Battle of, 245
Mattan, priest of Baal, 247
Mazkir, 72
Medes, 208, 333 f., 344 (see also Media)
Media, conquered by Assyrians, 204
Medians, see Medes
Mediterranean Sea, 136
Megiddo, 74, 129, 157, 160 (illus.); Battle of, 346; ruins of, 347 (illus.), 349 (illus.)
Megilloth, 403 (note)
Memphis, captured by Assyrians, 332; 375 (note 21)
Menahem, slays Shallum, 207; becomes king, 207; pays tribute to Tiglath-pileser III, 208
Meribaal, 8; befriended by David, 30
Merneptah, 76 (see also vol. 1)
Merodach-baladan, defies Sennacherib, 270; portrait of, 271 (illus.); defeated by Sennacherib, 272, 332
Mesha, rebels against Israel, 153 f.; his record on the Moabite Stone, 154; sacrifices his son, 155
Mesha Tablet, see Moabite Stone
Messiah, the, 35; Elijah the forerunner of, 150; in Isaiah, 282 f., 312
Mesopotamia, 135, 202
Micah, Book of, 318 (note)
Micah of Moresheth, **260** ff.; arraigns Jerusalem, 261; denounces oppression, 261; spurns sacrifice, 261; moral elevation of, 262, 317; proclaims the doom of Samaria and Jerusalem, 318 ff.; denounces oppressors and false prophets, 320 ff.; ethical teachings of, 323 f.; 355
Micah son of Imlah, 153
Michal, restored to David, 7 (see also vol. 1)
Milcom, god of Ammon, 21, 96, 410 (note 42)
Millo, 117 (note 53)
Minor Prophets, 220 (note)
Mizpah, 363
Moab, conquered by David, 21; 77; conquered by Omri, 143 f.; rebels against Israel, 153 f.; invaded by Israel and Judah, 155, 174 ff.; subjected by Jeroboam II, 185; 272, 357 (see also vol. 1)
Moabite Stone, 154 and illus.; alphabet of, 140
Moabites, punished by David, 21; 127; attack Israel, 159; invade Judah, 350 (see also Moab)
Moloch, 144, 330, 342
"Molten Sea," 84, 86 (illus.)
Months, the, 108 (note 30)
Moresheth, 260
Moriah, Mount, 12 (illus.)
Mosaic Law, see Torah
Moses, 216 (see also vol. 1)
Mosul, 345 (illus.)
Mourning customs, 7, 226 (note 27), 227 (note 33), 320 (note 88), 394 (note 92)

Mysticism, of Hosea, 198; of Jeremiah, 353, **387** (note 70)

N

Nabi, see Prophets
Nablus, 128 (see Shechem)
Nabopolassar, 344
Naboth, 148 f., 157, **171**
Nadab, murdered by Baasa, 130
Nahum, the Book of, 412 (note)
Nahum, the prophet, **334** f.; his taunt-song against Nineveh, 334 f., 412 ff.
Naphtali, 73 (see also vol. 1)
Nathan, the prophet, dissuades David from building a temple, 17; 18; his parable, 24 f., 38 f.; denounces David, 25; supports Solomon, 32; demands the succession for Solomon, 33; anoints Solomon king, 33 f.
Nazirites, 145 f. (see also vol. 1)
Nebiim, see Prophets
Nebiim Achronim, 288 (note), 369 (note)
Nebiim Rishonim, 369 (note)
Nebi-Yunus, 345 (illus.)
Nebo, 271 (illus.), 361 (illus.)
Nebuchadnezzar, defeats the Egyptians, 349; ascends the throne, 349; sacks Jerusalem, 350; exiles Jehoiachin, 350 f.; sets up Zedekiah, 351; invades Phoenicia and Judah, 359; conquers Jerusalem, 361; exiles Zedekiah, 362; brick stamp of, 361 (illus.)
Nebuzaradan, 362
Neby Dâûd, 34 (illus.)
Necho II, **346** f.; overcomes Josiah, 346; scarab of, 346 (illus.); deposes Jehoahaz, 347; sets up Jehoiakim, 347; defeated by Chaldeans, 348; 395 (note 95)
Neo-Babylonia, see Chaldea
New Moon, Feast of the, 93
New Year, 94
Nineveh, 194 (illus.), 200, 205, 276 (illus.); doom of, proclaimed by Nahum, 344 f.; destruction of, 344; 345 (illus.); Nahum's taunt-song against, 412 ff.; location of, 414 (note 56)
Ninhursag, 271 (illus.)
Ninth of Ab, 362 (note)
Nissan, 108 (note 30)
Nizabim, 72
Noph, 375 (note 21)

O

Obadiah, minister of Ahab, 146
Obadiah (prophet), 220 (note)
Obed, 251
Occupations, see Crafts and trades
Olive growing, 88
Olives, Mount of, 13 (illus.), 14 (illus.), **15,** 83, 190 (illus.)
Omar, Mosque of, 13 (illus.), 14 (illus.), 31 (illus.), 80
Omri dynasty, establishment of, 132; 141; under ban, 147, 153; destroyed, 157
Omri, proclaimed king, 132; victor in civil war, 132; reign of, **142** ff.; makes peace with Judah, 142; builds Samaria, 142; campaigns of, 143 f.; worsted by Arameans, 144; makes alliance with Phoenicians, 144
Ophel, 13
Ophir, 73, 245
Ornaments, see Jewelry
Orontes River, 136, 151

P

Parable, of the prophet Nathan, 24 f.; of the plumbline, 228; of the almond-branch, 371; of the seething pot, 371; of the potter and the clay, 390; of the yoke, 358, 390
Parallelism, 60 (note 84)
Parties, in Israel, 207 f.; in Judah, 269, 329, 357; **327** (see also Prophets, Rechabites, *Anavim*)
Pashhur, 399
Passover, 17, 93; celebration of, by Hezekiah, 266 f.; celebration of, by Josiah, 343 f.; 403 (note) (see also vol. 1)
Pathros, 313 (note 78)
Peace, universal, 282, 312
Pekah, slays Pekahiah, 208; rebels

against Assyria, 208; attacks Judah with Rezin of Damascus, 208; slain by Elah, 209
Pekahiah, slain by Pekah, 208
Pelethites, 40 (note 11)
Penuel, 128
Persia, 135
Persian Gulf, 135
Pestilence, in reign of David, 31
Petra, 248 (see also vol. 1)
Philadelphia, 20 (illus.)
Philistines, subject the Israelites, 5; at war with David, 9; defeated by David, 9; mercenaries of David, 19; 127; attack Israel, 159; defeated by Uzziah, 250; defeated by Hezekiah, 269; plot against Assyria, 270; subdued by Sennacherib, 272
Phoenicia, map of, 134; **135** ff., 202; reduced by Assyrians, 204; revolts against Assyria, 210; 357; rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, 359 (see also Phoenicians)
Phoenicians, allies of David, 22; 73; allies of Solomon, 75, 77, 133; **135** ff.; origin, race and language of, 135; their cities, 136 f.; origin of name, 137; political conditions among, 137; subject to Egyptians and Hittites, 137; independent, 137; as merchants and colonizers, 137 ff.; their industry and art, 139; their alphabet, 139, 140; relations of, with Israelites, 141; religion of, 141; in alliance with Omri, 144; attack Israel, 160; prophecy among, 215; subdued by Sennacherib, 272
Plowing, 87
"Pool of Hezekiah," 266 (illus.)
Pools of Solomon, 119 (illus.)
Potter and the clay, the parable of the, 390 f.
Prayer customs, 112 (note 38)
Priests, as teachers, 93; wicked, denounced by Hosea, 234 f.; reorganized by Hezekiah, 267; denounced by Jeremiah, 339, 378; attached to Temple service, 343 (see also High priest)
Prophecy, evolution of, **215** f.; basic impulse of, 262; an expression of the Jewish genius, 317; silenced by Manasseh, 330; reappears under Josiah, 336 (see also Prophets)
"Prophets" (division of Bible), 219 (note), 288 (note), 369 (note) (see also vol. 1)
Prophets, false, 253 f., 320; denounced by Jeremiah, 339, 378
Prophets, troops of, 93; organization of, 145; fight idolatry, 145 f.; persecuted by Jezebel, 146; their conception of God, 188; make history of Israel "different," 189; derivation of word, 215 (note); among other nations, 215; struggle against idolatry and injustice, 216; Minor, 220 (note); Major, 220 (note); basic ideas of, 262; suppressed under Manasseh, 330; reappear under Josiah, 336
Proverbs, Book of, 92
"Psalm of the Seven Thunders," 62 (note 96)
Psalms, the, 50 ff.
Psalms, the Book of, 50 (note)
Psalter, the, see Psalms, the Book of
Ptolemy Philadelphus, 20 (illus.)
Pul, see Tiglath-pileser III
Punishment, primitive notions concerning, 30 f.; in the Law of Moses, 249; in *Jeremiah*, 387; in *Ezekiel*, 387 (note 69)
Punt, 396 (note 1)
Purim, 403 (note)
Put, 396 (note 1)

R

Rabbah, see Rabbath-ammon
Rabbath-ammon, **20** (illus.); captured by David, 21
Rab-shakeh, demands surrender of Jerusalem, 277 ff.; 303 (note 42)
Rachel, weeping for her children, 385
Rain, "former" and "latter," 377 (note 32)
Ramah, 126, 131, 244
Rameses II, 76 (see also vol. 1)
Rameses III, 76

Ramoth-gilead, attacked by Ahab, 151
Raphia, 211
Rashi script, 140
Rechabites, **145** f., 351
Red Sea, 21 (see also vol. 1)
Rehoboam, succeeds Solomon, 99; rejected by the north, 123 f.; at war with Israel, 127; 190 (illus.); reign of, **243**
Religion, of the Israelites, 94, **216** ff. (see also God, the One); of the Phoenicians, 141 (see also Idolatry, "High Places"); of the Assyrians, 201, 252 (see also Star worship); of the Chaldeans, 345 (see also Sacrifice)
"Remnant, the," as preached by Isaiah, 281 f., 313
Rephaim, Plain of, 9
Revised Version, 62 (note 91)
Rezin, attacks Judah with Pekah, 208; death of, 209
Rezon, captures Damascus, 75; makes war on Solomon, 75
Riblah, 359, 361
Rimmon, 258 (illus.)
Rosh Hashanah, 108 (note 30) (see also vol. 1)

S

Sabbath, the, 93 (see also vol. 1)
Sacrifice, scorned by Amos, 192; decried by Hosea, 198; by Assyrians, 202 (illus.); scorned by Isaiah, 300; decried by Jeremiah, 353, 379, 393; of first-fruits, 373 (note 12); 393 (note 91)
Sacrifice, human, 142; by Ahaz, 253; under Manasseh, 330; among the Phoenicians, 394 (note 93)
Samaria, built by Omri, 142; compared to Jerusalem, 143; 145; besieged by Arameans, 150; 152 (illus.); besieged by Ben-hadad III, 158; doom of, proclaimed by Amos, 191; 203, 206; siege of, by Assyrians, 210; captured by Sargon II, 211; people of, exiled, 211; colonized by strangers, 211; beauty of, 298 (note 31)
Samaritans, origin of, 211
Samuel, 216 (see also vol. 1)
Samuel, Book of, 36 (note) (see also vol. 1)
Sargon I, 200 (see also vol. 1)
Sargon II, seizes throne of Assyria, 210; portrait of, 210 (illus.); captures Samaria, 211; defeats the Syrians and Egyptians, 211; murdered, 270
Saul, mourned by David, 3 ff.; 5, 6, 18, 26; fate of his descendants, 30 f. (see also vol. 1)
Scarab, 346 (illus.)
Schumacher, A., 347 (illus.)
Scopus, Mount, 14 (illus.)
Scythians, 333; overrun the coast, 334, 339; 344
Seals, 160
Sebaste, see Samaria
Sebastieh, 152 (illus.)
Secession of the north, 124
Selah, 52 (note 49)
Sennacherib, succeeds Sargon II, 270; overcomes his rebels, 272; invades Judah, 273; his account of his victories against Hezekiah, 275; on his throne before Lachish, 276 (illus.), 278 (illus.); demands surrender of Jerusalem, 277; meets with disaster, 280, 303 ff.; death of, 332
Seraphim, 371 (note 5)
Shabuoth, 17, 94, 403 (note) (see also vol. 1)
Shallum, 207
Shalmaneser III, checked at Battle of Karkar, 151, 203; Jehu pays tribute to, 158, 159 (illus.); 203 (illus.)
Shalmaneser IV, 138 (illus.); besieges Samaria, 210
Shamash, 130 (illus.)
Shaphan, 340
Sheba, land of, 98
Sheba, rebellion of, 28 f.; death of, 29
Sheba, the Queen of, visits Solomon, 98
Shebat, 108 (note 30)
Shebna, 267, 270, 329

Shechem, 11, 123, 127, **128** (illus.)
Sheep Shearing, Festival of, 93
Shekel, 225 (note 22)
Shemer, 142
Shephelah, 317
Shepherding, 88 f., 90 (illus.), 93, 193 (illus.)
Sheshonk, see Shishak
Shiloh, 15, 117 (note 56), 354, 392 (note 87) (see also vol. 1)
Shimei, 71
Shinar, Plain of, 200, 202; called Chaldea, 345 (see also vol. 1)
Shishak, gives asylum to Jeroboam, 95; **118** (note 62); invades Judah and Israel, 128, 243; 129 (illus.)
Shobach, 19 f.
Shomron, see Samaria
Sidon, 137, 202; rebels against Assyrians, 208; 272
Siegecraft, 205, 279 (note), 350
Siloam Inscription, alphabet of, 140; text of, **265** (illus.)
Siloam, pool of, 13, 263 (map)
Siloam, village of, 26 (illus.)
Simeon, 126 (see also vol. 1)
Sinai, see Horeb
Sirion, 63 (note 97)
Sivan, 108 (note 30)
Slavery, 187, 374 (note 19); law on, 398 (note 7) (see also vol. 1)
Slaves, of Jerusalem, liberated, 359; re-enslaved, 360; 187
Social abuses, 188; hated by God, 188, 217; denounced by Amos, 191; attitude of prophets toward, 217; in Judah, 253 (see also Economic evils and Luxury)
Solomon, son of Bathsheba, 32; struggle between, and Adonijah, 100; supported by Nathan, Zadok and Benaiah, 32; anointed king, 33 f.; empire of, 23 (map); his wisdom, 69 f., 107; his prosperity, 70 f.; his faults, 71; his government, 71 ff.; his fiscal system, 72 f.; commerce under, 73; wealth of, 73; luxury under, 73; "store cities" of, 74; his military system, 74; his reign one of peace, 74; his foreign enemies, 74 f.; harassed by Hadad and Rezon, 75; his foreign policy, 75; his marriages, 77; obtains the city of Gezer, 77; his favorite wife, 77; tolerates idolatry, 77; his building operations, 79 ff.; assisted by Hiram, 80; plan of his buildings, 80 (illus.); materials of his buildings, 80 f.; his labor levies, 80 f., 96 f.; his throne, 82; his Temple, 83 ff.; dedicates the Temple, 85 f.; his dedication address, 86, 109 ff.; his tolerance, 86; his conception of God, 86; Jeroboam revolts against, 95, 117 ff.; discontent under, 96 f.; his court, 97; compensates Hiram, 97; lives aloof from his people, 98; his splendor, 98; visited by the Queen of Sheba, 98, 115 f.; composer of proverbs, etc., 98, 105; old age of, 98; death of, 99; memory of, 99
Spain, 138
"Spoil-Speedeth-Prey-Hasteth," 282, 311
Stade, Bernhard, 84
Star worship, of Assyrians, 201, 342, 410 (note 41)
"Still small voice, the," 148, 169
"Store cities," Solomon's, 74
Succoth, 17, 94, 403 (note) (see also vol. 1)
Sumerians, 200 (see also vol. 1)
Sur, see Tyre
Susa, 333
Syria, origin of name, 135; 346 (see also Aram)

T

Taanach, 129
Table of Showbread, 83
Tahpanhes, 375 (note 21)
Talent, (measure of weight), 116 (note 50)
Tamar, 25
Tammuz, 108 (note 30)
Tanis, 76
Tarshish, see Spain
Tebeth, 108 (note 30)
Tekoa, 189, 190 (illus.)
Tel El-Mutasellim, 347 (illus.)

Temple, the, 78 (illus.); site of, 79; **83** ff.; significance of, 83; structure of, 83 f.; plan of, 84 (illus.); equipment of, 84 f.; dedication of, 85 f., 108 ff.; attracts the Israelites, 129; gains in prestige, 244; repaired by Jehoash, 248; Assyrian idols brought into, 252; purified by Hezekiah, 265; cleansed of idolatry by Josiah, 342; plundered by Nebuchadnezzar, 350; faith in, decried by Jeremiah, 354 f., 391 ff.; destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, 362
Ten Tribes, kingdom of the, see Israel, kingdom of; see also "Lost Ten Tribes"
Threshing, 88, 89 (illus.)
Thutmose III, 137
Tiglath-pileser III, seizes throne of Assyria, 203; conquests of, 204; government of, 204 f.; receives tribute from Menahem, 208; crowned king of Babylon, 209; death of, 209; portrait of, 209 (illus.); 250
Tigris River, 200, 245 (illus.)
Tirhakah, 279 and illus.
Tirzah, 142, 207
Tisha B'Ab, 362 (note), 403 (note)
Tishri, 108 (note 30)
Tomb of David, 34 (illus.)
"Tombs of the Kings," 245 (illus.)
Topheth, 342
Torah, the, notion of punishment in, 249; 359 (see also vol. 1)
Trade, see Commerce
Trade routes, 72 (map)
Transjordania, **155** (illus.) (see also vol. 1)
"Twelve, The," 219 (note)
Tyre, 15, 73, 137; leading city of Phoenicia, 137; **138** (illus.); commerce of, 141; 202; rebels against Assyrians, 208; besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, 359
Tyropean Valley, 13, 15, 79
Tzom Gedaliah, 363 (note)

U

Umman-manda, 412 f.
Universe, conception of, 64 (note 3)
Uriah the Hittite, 24; his death, 24
Uriah, priest of Ahaz, 252
Uriah, the prophet, put to death by Jehoiakim, 351
Ushanahuru, 331 (illus.)
Uzziah, accession of, 249; reign of, **250**; restores Judah's greatness, 250; death of, 250

V

Valley of Salt, Battle of the, 21; 219
Versification, Hebrew, 60 (note 84), 226 (note 29), 403 (note)
Village life, 92

W

Warfare, methods of, 154, 177 (note 44)
Weights and Measures, see Cubit, Ephah, Talent, Shekel, Bath, Homer
Wine growing, 88
Winnowing, 88
"Woman of Valor," the, 92

Y

Yahweh, 59 (note 82)
Yarmuk, 155 (illus.)

Z

Zabud, 72
Zadok, 18, 27; supports Solomon, 32; anoints Solomon king, 33 f.; **41** (note 16); sole high priest, 71
Zarephath, 137
Zebulun, 73, 266 (see also vol. 1)
Zechariah, king of Israel, 207, slain by Shallum
Zechariah, the prophet, 220 (note)
Zedekiah, accession of, 351; torn between parties, 357; rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, 359; consults Jeremiah, 360 f.; flees from Jerusalem, 361; blinded and exiled, 362
Zephaniah, Book of, 408 (note)
Zephaniah, the prophet, **335** f.; proclaims the "day of the LORD," 335; his vision of restoration, 335
Ziklag, 3, 5
Zimri, destroys house of Baasa, 132; his death, 132
Zion, Mount, 11, 13, 15, 16, 79
Zobah, 19 f., 75

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